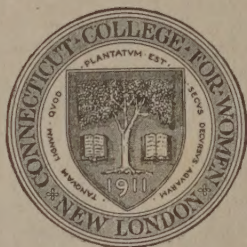


Connecticut College
Library



THE TUDOR
TRANSLATIONS

SECOND SERIES

EDITED BY

CHARLES WHIBLEY

VII

This Edition is limited to 1025 copies

THE
CIVILE CONVERSATION
OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST THREE BOOKS TRANSLATED BY
GEORGE PETTIE, Anno 1581
AND THE FOURTH BY
BARTH. YOUNG, Anno 1586

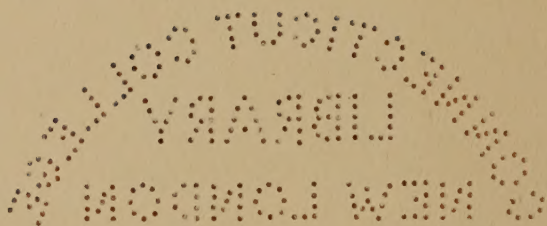
With an Introduction by
SIR EDWARD SULLIVAN, BART.

FIRST VOLUME



LONDON: CONSTABLE AND CO. LTD.
NEW YORK: ALFRED A. KNOPF
1925

177.1
G932c
v.1



Printed in Great Britain by T. and A. CONSTABLE LTD.
at the University Press, Edinburgh

INTRODUCTION

THE GUAZZO FAMILY



TEFANO GUAZZO was born of an ancient lineage in the year 1530, at Casale, the capital of Montferrat, in North-Western Italy. His father, Giovanni, had held the office of Treasurer to the Dukes of Mantua for

INTRO-
DUCTION

over thirty years; and at his death in December 1573 he impressed upon his four surviving children the importance of adhering to these princes, in the troubled conditions of the time. His son Stefano Guazzo entered the Treasurer's Office in the year which followed the momentous decision of Charles v. under which the government of Montferrat, long held by the Palaeologi, passed to the Gonzaga family. Young Stefano turned to a study of the law, and, always faithful to the interests of the Gonzaghi, served them in various secretarial capacities, both to his honour and to his advantage. He spent seven years in Spain on business of State, and shortly after the peace of Castel Cambresis in 1559 was sent by Duke Guglielmo as Ambassador to Charles ix. of France. Guazzo himself informs us in some of his letters of the generous treatment

b

v

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- he received at the hands of that king ; but from other
DUCTION letters of his we learn that his duties in this Embassy were the cause of trouble and much unhappiness of mind, a thing by no means surprising at a time when war was continually being waged abroad, and things at home were in a turmoil of civil and religious conflict.

On his return to Italy he was sent as Ambassador to Pius v., then recently elevated to the Papal throne. This Pope in his earlier days had studied theology at Casale ; and full of pleasant recollections of both the town and its people, he received Guazzo with much warmth. At the close of 1566 died the Duchess Margarita, the widow of that Gonzaga to whom Charles v. had transferred the principality of Montferrat. Guazzo had been her secretary and counsellor, and he it was who pronounced her funeral oration.

Shortly after, he married Francesca da Ponte, and retired from official connection with affairs of State. Thenceforward he devoted himself to study and the cares of a householder, though with a mind ever occupied on projects for the general encouragement of good discipline, and the alleviation of the many miseries which had fallen upon his afflicted district under the stress of war and depredation. It was about this period that he took in hand the re-establishment of the Academy of the *Illustrati*, which, founded some years before under his own advice, was soon destined to eclipse its ill-famed predecessor, the *Argonauti*, which had been promoted some twenty years previously in Casale by the dissolute Nicolo Franco.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

It should be borne in mind that through the earlier period of Guazzo's literary career there was nothing more closely interwoven with his aims in life than the haunting dream of an Academy to be identified with himself. The account he gives of the objects and the practices of these associations in the *Civile Conversation* brings this fact prominently forward: and here it may be well to say that although Guazzo himself is not one of the *dramatis personae* in the dialogue of which his main work is composed, he is, from start to finish, very obviously the real speaker under the masks of both his brother William and Anniball Magnocavalli. If anything were wanted to show that this was so, we have but to read the expressions of affection, reverence, satisfaction, and even pride, which come so easily from Guazzo's pen when alluding to Academies generally, and more especially to his own foundation, that of the *Illustrati*, to be completely assured upon the point:

'ANNIB. It is a common saying, that the bondes of vertue binde more straightly, then the bondes of blood. And in trueth one good man may be sayd to be a neere kinsman to another good man, by the conformitie of their minds and manners.

'GUAZ. Heerby I imagine how great the concorde, the pleasure, and the profit is, which is reaped by the Academie of the *illustratie* (as they tearme them) established in this citie.

'ANNIB. You are [not] deceived in your imagination, for this Academy being assembled in the name of God, you may well thinke, that he is in the midst of them, and that hee mainteineth it in peace and amitie. What comfort every one receiveth by it, I cannot sufficiently set foorth unto you: for that I have tried in my selfe and seene plainely in other Academikes, that there is not any one so afflicted with the common miseries of this citie, and with his private troubles, who setting once his foote into

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- the hal of the Academie, seemeth not to arive at the haven
DUCTION of tranqulitie, and beginneth not to cleere his minde of care :
casting his eyes about the hall to see those goodly devises,
full of profounde mysteries. I may well say of my selfe, that
when my bodie is shut within it, all my yrkesome thoughtes are
shut out : the which attend me at the doore, and at my going
out get uppon my shoulders. But touching the good which
commeth of [t]his happie assembly, you may be assured in
thinking to your selfe what diversitie of learning is there
handled, sometimes with publike lectures, sometimes with
private reasonings, which breede that delight, which commeth
of giving and receiving, as we have sayde before.' (Bk. II. 224.)

The members of these Academies—and there were many
of them throughout Italy¹—were each known by some
special name: Guazzo's own title in the *Illustrati* being
l' Elevato (the Exalted). His prime motive in lending his
support to such societies was educational. Not content
with an institution for the recital of poems, little, or not at
all, allied to the circumstances of the time, he dreamed of a
centre where the associates should each in turn communi-
cate to his fellows the gathered fruit of his own particular
branch of study; and where, for the better understanding
of the subject, a discussion should take place, with free
power to criticise both the topic and the point of view
from which it was presented.² The *Civile Conversation* is,
in a way, an example of such debates as were in his mind
when engaged in the founding of his own Academy. This
well-loved offspring of his enthusiasm survived its founder
by only a few years, although amongst its associates were

¹ See Tiraboschi, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, 1805-1809, vol. vii.
chaps. xxix. and xxx.; also *Civile Conversation*, Bk. I. 42-3.

² See Bk. I. 41, 'and therupon it is commonly saide that Disputation is
the sifter out of the truth.'

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

such men as Gian Jacopo Bottazzo, Francesco Pugiella, Annibale Magnocavalli, Orazio Navazzotti, Gherardo Borgogni, and others.

INTRO-
DUCTION

Amongst those who shared an affectionate friendship with Guazzo were Bernardino Baldi, one whose books, philosophy, and profound learning led to his being styled 'the Varro of the sixteenth century'; Girolamo Vida, Bishop of Alva, a cultured writer of Latin verse; Francesco Panigarola, Bishop of Asti, the famous preacher; and Carlo Emanuele, Duke of Savoy, one of the most learned Italians of his time. One of Guazzo's minor literary projects was a tabulated collection of words of wisdom, figures of speech, proverbs, and other such matter, gathered from the writings or sayings of eminent scholars of the day, a work which the Duke of Savoy in 1588 was anxious to publish. His death, however, intervened, and the book was not printed.

Though Guazzo possessed a country seat in Ozzano, he was always better pleased to rusticate at Olivola, amidst the hills of Montferrat, where he had built himself a cottage, to which he had given the name of 'Il Bel Riposo'; and there, of all other places, he loved to have his friends about him; and few men in Italy at the time were more sought after and honoured than he was by those that called him friend.

In his later days life had become burdensome to him through constant attacks of melancholia, a malady against which he contended manfully, aided by his strong religious feelings, and not less by a medicine which, he used to say, he carried always about him—his will. His brother

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Guiglielmo suffered in a similar way, as is seen from time
DUCTION to time in the pages of the *Civile Conversation*, and more especially at the opening of the dialogue.

Guazzo lived in happiness with both his first and his second wife. The first died in 1575, leaving him, as her tombstone tells, the sorrowing father of three children. It is the only monument in Casale that bears the name of Stefano Guazzo upon it.

Of these children, his daughter Olimpia became the wife of Orazio Curioni, a Doctor of Law at Asti—a happy marriage, as is testified by the affectionate nature of the father's letters to both. Olimpia's brother Antonio took up the legal profession, and became a magistrate at Trino. Both children had been educated by their father himself; and amongst the many valuable maxims inculcated by him, one stands out pre-eminent above the rest: 'It is better to die than do an unworthy deed.' It was with a view to assisting his son in his law studies that Guazzo moved his home to Pavia towards the end of 1589. Received there with acclamation, he was at once made a citizen of the town. What probably gave him greater satisfaction was his election as a member of the Academy of the *Affidati*, of which he afterwards became the president. He died at Pavia on the 6th December 1593, and was buried in the Church of San Tommaso de' Predicatori.

Professor Giovanni Canna,¹ to whose industry and research I am indebted for many of the foregoing details

¹ *Della Vita e degli Scritti di Stefano Guazzo*—Discorso detto . . . in Casale di Monferrato. Firenze, 1872 (privately printed). Estratto dal periodico *La Scuola*, anno 1^o, vol. ii. fasc. iv., v.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

of Guazzo's life, can mention only one blot—if it be a blot—on the generally exemplary conduct of the author of the *Civile Conversation*: he was a courtier during a great portion of his life; and, to put it shortly, he did as courtiers have to do. Guazzo, he tells us, was made for frankness and for truth, but the spirit of the time was against him, and under its compelling influence he lowered himself in his own eyes to forms of blandishment and flattery which he would have done well to avoid. His biographer, however, finds some excuse for him in that Guazzo has told us himself, on several occasions, that he was painfully cognisant of the slavery of his official position. It should be remembered too, that after the death of the Duchess Margarita, and the suppression of the independence of Casale, Guazzo made his home far from the Mantuan Court, and was no longer engaged in any State employment. His real views, at a time when he was more at liberty to speak openly concerning 'subjectes and their conversation with Princes,' are well expressed thus:

'And though there bee nowe and then some one which mainteineth himselfe still in credite, and yet the poore soule alwayes liveth with an unquiet mind, and his maister doth continually loade him like a good horse, with some burden or other, and never leaveth untill hee have quite tyred him, so that hee findeth that saying true, That whether thy Prince love thee, or hate thee, it is all one evill. Whereupon I thinke not amisse to followe the fable of the earthen vessell, whiche in no wise woulde have the company of the brasen vessell. And you know wel, that in their companie a man cannot utter his minde freely nor doe any thing contrarie to their pleasure: if hee doe, hee shalbe no friende of Cæsars' (Bk. ii. 209-10).¹

¹ See also Bk. III. 94-5.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

When Professor Canna comes to deal with Guazzo as a writer, he dwells regretfully, as an Italian should, on the sad decline of good taste in literature which had set in towards the closing years of the sixteenth century. The art and elegance which flourished in such luxuriant strength, in both prose and poetry, in the early and middle periods of that century were then rapidly disappearing; and accompanying this downward move was a corresponding falling off in the national standards of behaviour (*“costume”*) and in the vigour of Italian study. Guazzo's own work suffered in the change; for, admirable as his ideas were on style, lucidity, and grace in literary composition, his practice was not invariably in complete accord with the high level of his own standards. Further, the Professor tells us ‘that the art of Dialogue, a form chosen by Guazzo ‘himself to suit the taste of the time, was not successful in ‘his hands, lacking the simplicity of natural variety shown ‘by such masters as Baldassare Castiglione and Torquato ‘Tasso in works of a kind similar to his own. He gives too ‘easy admittance to the commonplace, to what is vulgar, ‘and, at times, unseemly; mars a witty tale with some- ‘thing that offends; uses strange verbiage based on ‘Spanish models; and, seeking to soar, too often drops ‘into triviality. Looked at from this standpoint, Guazzo ‘is a sixteenth-century writer in whom the seventeenth ‘century shows itself in too marked a fashion.’¹

¹ It must of course be understood that Professor Canna speaks only of the Italian of the original work; and that, when contrasting Guazzo's style with that of Castiglione and Torquato Tasso, he is taking a rather high standard for comparison. Whatever faults Guazzo may be guilty of in his writing of the language of his day, they are, so far as English readers are concerned,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

‘Nevertheless,’ his biographer continues, ‘with all these defects there is much in his works that can be read with pleasure and advantage, where the traces of such disfigurement are either slight or non-existent; and after all, Stefano Guazzo is well entitled to a fair measure of thanks and praise for being one of those who devoted his best energies to the advancement of the Italic spirit in the literary studies of Piedmont, a district so long the battleground of warring nations, and too often sequestered from the culture of greater Italy.’

In addition to other works, the author of the *Civile Conversation* dipped occasionally into poetical composition, though his efforts in that direction never rose beyond mediocrity. Indeed, he has himself told us that he wrote more to follow the fashion of the period, and to satisfy the urgent appeals of his friends, than from any instinctive promptings of his own nature, which rebelled against poetry of every kind. He was the author of five books, two being collections of Letters, and three in dialogue form. The earliest of these was *A Collection of Letters of Gentlemen of Montferrat*, published in Brescia in 1566. It included some of his own letters, but it is chiefly interesting as a picture of the life, mind, and manners of the time.

This was followed in 1586 by a volume entitled *Dialoghi Piaccevoli del Sig. Stefano Guazzo*, dedicated to Ludovico

completely done away with by the fine Elizabethan vivacity and grace in which Pettie has re-dressed the French and Italian versions from which he was translating. Canna does not seem to have been aware of Pettie’s translation, for there is no mention of it anywhere in the *Discorso*—a typed copy of which has been supplied to me by the courtesy of the Librarian of the Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele in Rome.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Gonzaga, Duke of Nevers, which ran into many editions.
DUCTION The subjects treated of are various, having to do with Rulers, Judges, Magistrates, 'Imprese,' Latin and Tuscan poetry, Honour, and Death. In Professor Canina's opinion some of these Dialogues are perhaps the best of all Guazzo's writings. He certainly shows both strength and frankness in dealing with the administration of law in those times, denouncing the iniquity of servile justices with a whole-hearted honesty. An interesting feature of the twelve dialogues of which this volume is composed consists in the large number of Italian proverbs, which are continuously cited in its pages. Guazzo was, indeed, perhaps the most industrious collector of proverbial sayings in his day, strong evidence of which is very clearly furnished by the *Civile Conversation* itself.

In 1590 he published in Venice a collection of his own letters, which he dedicated to Vincenzo Gonzaga, the new Duke of Mantua and Montferrat. They possess no special interest for us beyond showing more of the man, and of the times he lived in; yet there were no less than seven editions published before 1614.

Another work, typical of the taste of a declining century, was *La Ghirlanda della Contessa Angela Maria Beccaria*, which was printed, after Guazzo's death, at Genoa in 1595. It consists of some sixty-eight 'Madrigali' in laudation of the Countess, to whom the collection is addressed, composed by friends of Guazzo at his own invitation, for the whole of which he supplied explanatory interpretations as editor-in-chief. The volume is useful only as representing the artificial habits and curious literary idiosyncrasies

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of the period. It was dedicated to Guazzo's daughter, Olimpia Curioni. INTRO-
DUCTION

Five examples of Madrigals of a similar type may be read in the *Civile Conversation*.¹ The commendations of them which follow in the text exhibit the all-powerful tendency to adulation that pervaded the atmosphere of courtly society at that time. *La Ghirlanda* was not reprinted.

Guazzo also contributed some poems to a work entitled *La Lacrime degli Academici di Casale*, on the death of Margarita Palaeologa, Duchess of Mantua and Marchioness of Monferrato, Turin, 1567.²

By far the most important of Guazzo's works, *La Civile Conversatione*, was first published at Brescia in 1574. I put off consideration of its contents to the section which deals with George Pettie and his translation. The book obtained an immediate popularity in Italy, where edition after edition was eagerly taken up. Ten of them had appeared by the year 1621. Two French versions came out in France in 1579, one by Gabriel Chappuys and the other by François Belleforest; and both were reprinted a good many times. In 1581 Pettie's translation into English of the first three books was printed; in 1586 these books were reprinted with the addition of Book iv. translated by Bartholomew Young; and not long after, two Latin renderings of the whole work made their appearance.

Canna, as already mentioned, does not speak in any spirit of enthusiasm of the *Civile Conversation* as an

¹ Bk. iv. 191-2.

² For further information on the academies of Casale see Flavio Valerani's *Le Accademie di Casale nei secoli xvi. e xvii.* Alessandria, 1908.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO-
DUCTION example of Italian literary style, though he has a good deal to say in praise of the valuable instructions to be gathered from it. It is at least somewhat strange, if the Professor's opinion be well founded, that John Florio in earlier days should have unhesitatingly coupled Guazzo with a writer of such high standing as Castiglione.¹

GEORGE PETTIE: LIFE

George Pettie, the first to translate the *Civile Conversation* into English, was a younger son of John le Petite, or Pettie, of Tetsworth and Stoke-Taimach in Oxfordshire, and was born in 1548. When about sixteen years of age he was a scholar or student of Christ Church, Oxford, under Canon Thomas Barnard, and he took one degree in Arts at the end of 1568. After leaving the university he travelled beyond seas, and, in the words of his grand-nephew, Anthony à Wood,² 'at length became excellent for his 'passionate penning of amorous stories, equal for poetical 'invention with his dear friend William Gager, and as 'much commended for his neat stile as any of his time.'³ Impressed apparently with the success which had attended William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566-7), Pettie composed the work by which he is at present best known, *A Petite Palace of Pettie his Pleasure*, the title of which was obviously plagiarised from Painter's volume of romances.

¹ See Florio's *Second Frutes* (1591); and *A Worlde of Wordes*, Epistle dedicatorie (1598).

² *Athenae Oxon.*, ed. Bliss, I. 552.

³ This criticism apparently refers to some unknown writings of G. Pettie. See note on next page *op. cit.*

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO-
DUCTION

This work of Pettie's was licensed on the 6th of August 1576, and was widely read as soon as published—no less than three editions appearing in the year of its first publication. By 1613 four other editions had been published. Encouraged by the popularity attained by his first effort in literature—although he himself styles it 'a trifling woorke'¹—Pettie set about another volume of a more serious kind, intending, as he says in the 'Preface to the Readers' of the *Civile Conversation*, 'to purchase some better fame by some better woorke, and to countervayle my former Vanitie, with some formal gravitie.' This was his translation of Guazzo's *Civile Conversation*, which appeared in print in 1581.

The first reference to the *Civile Conversation* in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London is of a distinctly curious nature. It runs as follows :

1579. 11 Novembris

Master Watkins

Lycenced unto him to be Translated into
Englishe and so to be prynted A Booke
intituled : la civile conversation divisee
en quatre livres Traduite d'Italien
Du. Sieur Estienne Guazzo gentil
home de Casal par Gabriell Chap-
pius Tourangeoys
xvid and a copie paid to master
coldok 27 februarii 1580 [*i.e.* 1581].'²

¹ Wood's description of the work is as follows : 'The aforesaid *Petite Palace* I have in my study, and for the respect I bear to the name of the author (he having been uncle to my mother Maria la Petite) I will keep it ; but it is so far from being excellent or fine, that it is more fit to be read by a school-boy, or rustical amoretto, than by a gent. of mode or language.' *Op. cit.*

² Arber's *Transcript*, vol. ii.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Then under date 27 Feb. 1581 :
DUCTION Master Watkins Received of him for the civill conversation which was
Licenced to him, 11 *novembris* 1579 xvjd and a copy.¹

The November 1579 entry is an extremely important one, clearing up, as it does, a point on which some ill-founded views have been entertained by a few writers who have without authority ventured to assert that Pettie made use of Belleforest's French version when translating Guazzo's work.

The entry also suggests very forcibly that Pettie, having heard that the *Civile Conversation* had been a great literary success both in Italy and France, was determined to be first in the field with an English version, and had procured a copy of Chappuys' translation for the purpose. The words 'to be translated into English' show pretty plainly also that very little of the translator's work had then been done; and, indeed, apart from the evidence of the Stationers' entry, it would not have been at all likely that Pettie in the middle of November could have done much translation of a French book which had only been published some time after July 15 in the same year, that being the date of Chappuys' Dedication to Seigneur Jean Pierre Duszo, with which the French volume begins.

Although the title of Pettie's *Civile Conversation* states that it was 'translated out of French,' the author was careful to let us know that he had consulted Guazzo's original for the purpose of making his rendering as com-

¹ When the money was paid and the copy of the finished work handed in, the later entry was apparently added to the previous one, which was without any record of payment up till then.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

plete as possible. As he himself says (Preface, *ad fin.*), ‘ I have supplied divers thinges out of the Italian original, ‘whiche were left out by the French translator, with what ‘judgment, I referre to your judgement. I have included ‘the places within two starres,¹ as you may see throughout the Booke.’ He might, at the same time, have told us, but does not do so, that he had occasionally added ‘divers thinges’ which were no part of the original; and, in one notable instance, about two pages of matter which were altogether his own—this interpolation consisting of an eulogium on Queen Elizabeth,² which, although a remarkable example of Pettie’s prose at its best, seems to be somewhat out of place in an Italian work such as the *Civile Conversation*.

But to continue the story of his life. Pettie seems to have been a soldier by profession, but we have no definite knowledge as to his having taken any active part in the army. The metaphorical allusions to military matters contained in the Preface to the *Civile Conversation* would seem to suggest that he had had some experience of service in the field; but Anthony à Wood, his grand-nephew, is silent on the subject, although mentioning that he was ‘a captain and a man of note’ at the time of his death.

Wood’s account of the chief literary work of his own grand-uncle is a singularly disappointing contribution to English biography: ‘The said Pettie translated from

¹ These stars are retained in the reprinted text. There are no stars used in Book IV.

² See Bk. II. 201-2. Francis Bacon’s eulogium on the same monarch may be read with interest in conjunction with that of Pettie. It will be found in Spedding’s edition of *Bacon’s Works*, vol. iii. 306-7.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO-
DUCTION ‘ French into English (with a preface of his own put to
‘ it) *The Civile Conversation* of M. Stephen Guazzo, in
‘ 4 books ; written originally in the Italian tongue, which
‘ I have also. Three of the said books were translated by
‘ the said Pettie, the fourth was begun by him, but finished
‘ by Bartholomew Young of the Middle-Temple, gentle-
‘ man, being the same Bartholomew, as I think, who lived
‘ afterwards at Ashhurst in Kent, and died there in 1621.
‘ What other matters G. Pettie hath written, or trans-
‘ lated, I cannot tell, nor do I know anything material of
‘ him besides, only that he died in the prime of his years
‘ at Plymouth in Devonshire (being then a captain and a
‘ man of note) about the latter end of July in fifteen
‘ hundred eighty and nine, and was buried, as I have been
‘ told, in the great church there. The lands which he
‘ had by his father’s gift in Aston-Rowant in Kingston in
‘ the parish thereof, and at Tetsworth in Oxfordshire, he
‘ gave to his brother Christopher Pettie.’¹

It will be noticed in this meagre story that there is no information on the subject of the *Civile Conversation* beyond what was already in print on the title-page and in the Preface of the 1586 edition of that work. Wood, although a member of the family, and as such entitled to make inquiries of any reasonable kind, does not seem to have made any effort to collect further details relating to the life of the author of a book that had become extremely popular in England, and the original of which had in 1579 been twice translated into French. He was also apparently ignorant of the fact that his own copy of the

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 552.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Civile Conversation was the second edition, for he was
unaware of the existence of the earlier one.

INTRO-
DUCTION

COURTESY-BOOKS

Before dealing with Pettie's chief work—now reprinted for the first time—it may be well, by way of introduction, to say a few words on the best-known Courtesy-books that occupied the reading attention of people who lived for some generations before his day. Books such as these form, as a matter of fact, no unimportant part of that great and enlightening movement known as the Renaissance. Beginning with tentative and uncertain steps, these volumes put before the people of an ill-mannered and barbarous age a written embodiment of all that a more cultivated code could impart with reference to better habits of life, to a more generous and self-denying outlook on social intercourse, and, at times, to all that a higher moral standard could effect in brightening and rendering more tolerant the everyday relations between man and man. Italy was, without question, the pioneer in these and many other efforts made for the humanising of the world; and the wonder was that she ever attained success, hampered as she was all through by the all but insurmountable difficulties of her natural position. But, as a great writer has said, when speaking of the later period of the Renaissance:

‘The Italians were a peculiar people. They had resisted the Teutonic impact of the mediæval past; but they had failed to prepare themselves for the drama of violence and bloodshed

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- which the feudal races played out on the plains of Lombardy.
DUCTION They could never be left alone. Successive invasions, followed by the petrifying stagnation of political and ecclesiastical tyranny, checked their natural solution and suspended the intellectual life, before the fruit-time had succeeded the flower-time of the Renaissance. When all her deities were decayed or broken, Italy still worshipped beauty in fine art and literary form. This is the true greatness of those fifty years of glorious achievement and pitiful humiliation, during which the Italians turned deaf ears to combatant and conqueror, intent on problems that involved the future destinies of man.' ¹

Not the least amongst these civilising efforts to foster a new conception of humanity, and to create a common mental atmosphere, modulating the coarser elements of the world, inculcating the form that lends grace and sublimity to art, style to poetry, and urbanity to social manners, stand the Books of Courtesy of the Italian Renaissance. From early in the fourteenth century to the close of the sixteenth their stream continued. The names of their writers were many, but for present purposes it is only necessary to mention a few of the best known among them, such as : Bonvicino da Riva, Francisco da Barbarino, Agnolo Pandolfini (died 1446), Matteo Palmieri (1405-1475), Baldassare Castiglione, Giovanni Possevini (*Dialogo dell' Onore*, 1553), Della Casa (died 1556), and Stefano Guazzo.

The most celebrated works of three of these authors had the good fortune to be turned into English by competent translators : *Il Cortegiano*, by Thomas Hoby (1561);

¹ See J. A. Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy: Italian Literature*, Pt. ii. 456, 1898 ed.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Il Galateo, by Robert Peterson (1576); and *La Civile Conversatione*, by George Pettie (1581). INTRO-
DUCTION

Only two of these translations have, in recent years, been made available for readers in a more modern form than a first or very early edition—the *Courtier* and the *Galateo*. The third has lain practically unread from generation to generation; though Guazzo's *name* has been occasionally mentioned in Histories of English Literature and a few other works of a literary character. His existence and that of his translator have been admitted, but of his work and its nature—beyond what is conveyed by its title, *The Civile Conversation*—no studied information has, except in one case to be mentioned later, been vouchsafed to students of Elizabethan writings from 1586 down to the beginning of the present century. That unnoticed volume is Pettie's translation of Guazzo's *Civile Conversation*.

PETTIE'S TRANSLATION

'The Civile Conversation of M. Steeven Guazzo, written first in Italian, and nowe translated out of French by George Pettie, devided into foure bookes,' was published by Richard Watkins in London in 1581; small 4to in form, and printed in black letter, with introductory matter and poetical quotations in italic and roman type. This, the first edition, contains only Books I., II., and III., the omission of Book IV. being explained by a note at the end of the Preface to the Readers: 'I have not published

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'the fourth Booke, for that it contayneth muche triflyng
DUCTION 'matter in it.'

Further information regarding the translation is furnished by the second edition of the work, which appeared in 1586, the title-page of which states that the fourth book was 'translated out of Italian . . . by Barth. Young, of the Middle Temple, Gent.'

Pettie's Dedication, which is dated the 6th of February 1581, is addressed to the Lady Norrice. She was the wife of Baron Norris of Rycote, whose father had been executed as the alleged lover of Anne Boleyn (1536). Both Lord Norris and his wife were favourites of Queen Elizabeth, who used to call Lady Norris 'her black crow.' Elizabeth restored to them the property which Henry VIII. had confiscated. Lady Norris died in 1597.

The Preface to the Readers is in many respects a very interesting piece of writing, admirably expressed, and marked throughout by a strong spirit of personal independence. Against one class of un-English pretenders the writer is full of indignation—those travellers who, on the strength of a visit to some other country, make it their business to speak slightly of their own. Then, though not himself a scholar, Pettie is whole-heartedly on the side of genuine scholarship and study; urging his readers with a breezy eloquence, backed by convincing logic, not to allow themselves to be ashamed to show their learning. 'Confesse it, professe it, imbrace it, honor it,' he says, 'for it is it which honoureth you, it is only it which maketh you men, it is only it whiche maketh you Gentlemen.' In another passage he takes up the cudgels in good fighting

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

trim against Sir John Cheke and all who with him were then denouncing the use of latinised forms of speech in English writing—not that he indulges overmuch in the foreign forms himself, but that he knows no reason why he should be prevented from using them; ‘for it is indeed ‘the ready way to inrich our tongue, and to make it ‘copious, and it is the way which all tongues have taken ‘to inrich them selves.’ The English language has certainly broadened richly since Pettie’s strenuous appeal against such restrictions; and he is entitled to no small share in the glory that has been won.

The translation of the *Civile Conversation* takes the form of a dialogue, thus preserving the scheme of the original Italian. The Proeme to the work (page 13) sets forth clearly, and with brevity, the circumstances which led to its being written; the names of the two persons who carry on the conversation of which the whole is composed, with descriptions of them both; and the reasons the author had for writing out their discourses. The late Sir Walter Raleigh, in one of the passing references he makes to Guazzo’s name in his Introduction to Hoby’s *Courtier*,¹ tells us ‘that Castiglione, Bembo, ‘Aretino, Guazzo, Pasquier, Speroni, and many others of ‘those who shaped the dialogue for argumentative and ‘dramatic purposes may fairly claim a place in the Genealogy ‘of English Comedy.’ I not only agree with this view generally, but I hope to show before finishing my remarks that Guazzo, as translated by Pettie, is perhaps entitled to a more important place than any of such claimants, inas-

¹ Tudor Translations, p. lxxxiv.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

much as the *Civile Conversation* was a work that appealed at once to Shakespeare, and one from which, for many good reasons, he never hesitated to borrow during the whole time in which he was engaged in dramatic composition.

The work itself is, to begin with, a most admirable and highly finished piece of prose composition; simple and stately in expression; dignified without any trace of pedantry, and colloquial without vulgarity; full of racy idiom, terse and telling illustration; and crowded from beginning to end with the proverbs and sayings of the time: free from the Euphuism,¹ the diffusiveness, and the overdone Latinity which mar so many of the writings of the period: quaintly humorous at times; and at times eloquent as English may be—the whole work being characterised by a style in which almost every sentence flows evenly and naturally with the rhythmical and balanced cadence which forms so distinguishing a feature of Shakespeare's prose. Next, it is a picture, minute in every detail, of Italian life and morals, both public and domestic, during the second half of the sixteenth century, which could not fail to interest largely the numerous young Englishmen of station whose custom it then was to make the journey to Italy a part of their social education, and an almost necessary preliminary to taking any share in public life in their own country. Many, too, outside this

¹ When Dr. A. W. Ward says, 'In general manner of diction, including the illustration fetched from accommodating repertoires of strange facts in the natural world, Pettie, so far as I can judge, is the precise exemplar of *Euphuies*,' it is obvious that he cannot have made himself familiar with Pettie's greatest work, the *Civile Conversation*. (*A History of English Dramatic Literature*, 1899, vol. i. p. 280-1.)

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

special and not very numerous class must have hailed with delight a volume which brought home to them the fact that after all there was but little to choose between the England of their day and the Italy of which they had heard so much, in the matter of the foibles, petty vices, and general shortcomings of the peoples of both countries in their everyday domestic life. Other likely readers of the book would no doubt have been the large Italian population that crowded London at that time; the many dramatists whose plays had to do with Italy and its social code; and the host of writers in prose and poetry whose works had for many years before come to be affected by the all-pervading Italian influence.¹ At any rate, from whatsoever cause it may have happened, the first edition of the *Civile Conversation* was speedily absorbed, and within five years a second edition was, apparently, as quickly exhausted; the result of which to-day is that extremely few copies of either the first or the second edition are known to be in existence.²

One of the strong features of Guazzo's work is that Courtly life and the etiquette demanded in such exacting circles are all but excluded from the first three Books. That subject, in all its bearings, had been already so fitly dealt with by Castiglione in his *Courtier* that there was no room for another treatise of the kind. Guazzo tells us as much himself, as the following extract shows: 'It now cometh in my head, that we have not ordered our

¹ See an excellent chapter, 'The Italian Renaissance in England,' in Prof. Mary Scott's *Elizabethan Translations from the Italian*, 1916.

² The last copy sold in London of the first edition, and not quite perfect, was secured by an American buyer for £130, at Sotheby's, April 1924.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- ' matters as we should have done . . . wee shoulde fyrst
DUCTION ' have spoken of the Conversation betweene Princes and
' the Courtier'; to which Anniball replies: ' We sayd
' yesterday, that Princes had no neede of our instructions,
' and therefore it is not needeful to prescribe unto them
' any orders how to entertayne their traine: for they
' behave themselves in their courtes honourablye, peacibly,
' and quietly. . . .' William Guazzo continues to press
his Doctor friend 'to prescribe some order at least to
their servants'; but Anniball makes answer: ' You
' know we are eased of this labour by him who with his
' learned penne hath most perfectly fourmed the Courtier'
(Bk. III. 111). The allusion to Castiglione's great work
is unmistakable, but assurance is made double sure by
the first edition of the Italian original, where the name is
printed in full in the shoulder-note beside the passage.
The truth is, that Guazzo never intended his book to be
regarded as anything but a treatise that confined itself
strictly to the great middle classes as distinguished from
the patricians of a higher social order: and herein lies
the reason of its popularity at the date of its publication.
There are other references to its scope elsewhere in its
pages, such, for instance, as:—' ANNIBALL. I neither can,
' neither ought in these discourses to followe the steps of
' the auncient Philosophers, for albeit their reasons be
' at this day the same, that they were a thousand yeere
' since, yet neither the times, the men, nor the manners
' are like. . . . Wherefore you must not mervayle . . . if
' in the discourse of civile conversation, I intreate rather
' of matters, which in my opinion are necessary for the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

‘present tyme, than of matters written in Bookes, and
‘used in tyme past, and if I speake rather lyke a meere
‘Citizen, then a Philosopher’ (Bk. ii. 110).

INTRO-
DUCTION

Many as were the Courtesy-books current in England at the time of the publication of Pettie’s work, there were only two that had any great repute, both being Italian in their origin. These were Hoby’s *Courtier*, 1561, and Peterson’s *Galateo*, 1576. The latter was the only one that before Pettie’s *Civile Conversation* could be regarded as a help to the socially uneducated amongst such English people as were desirous of obtaining a knowledge of correct behaviour, coupled with a higher standard in æsthetic precept touching the many irregularities then prevalent in everyday society. The *Courtier*, as its very name implies, was the manual of persons of much superior rank, already refined by long-established tradition and such reading as tended to stabilise the social practices of the distinguished company in which they moved.

So far as behaviour was concerned the *Galateo* warns its readers against such ill-bred actions as follow :

Cautions to servants against ‘dirty practices’—some of them better left unmentioned here. Directions to persons in company : ‘not to be lolling asleepe’; not to ‘buskell them selves, reache, streach and yawn’; not to ‘pull out their knives or their scisers and doe nothing els but pare their nailes’; not to ‘pounce with the elbowe’—by way of emphasis in conversation; not to ‘chide at the table.’ These are only a selection from what the author himself describes as ‘those beastly

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- behaviours and fashions.' Certain passages through
DUCTION the volume are left in their original Italian, as being too obscene to print in English : Dante is frequently quoted, but largely for the purpose of showing how vulgar and indecent he too could be. Towards the end of the work the tone improves ; and, indeed, there are some passages comparable with Pettie's *Guazzo*, as in the directions for effective speaking, but lacking Pettie's power in mastery of English. These, then, being the two best recognised works on Courtesy in the country at the time when Pettie's *Civile Conversation* first saw the light, we can see at once that the place of the last-named work fell naturally midway between the *Courtier* of Sir Thomas Hoby and the *Galateo* of Robert Peterson—if anything, it came nearer to Hoby's work than to Peterson's, for its pages are never blemished with descriptions of the more or less disgusting practices which so unpleasantly crowd the earlier part of Della Casa's treatise. And yet Mr. J. E. Spingarn tells us, in his recent, and charmingly printed, edition of the *Galateo*,¹ ' that of all the mere courtesy-books, the *Galateo* alone survives.' It is true he takes the phrase ' courtesy-book ' to mean something different from what is usually associated with its meaning in the English of to-day ; and even goes so far as to say of Castiglione's work that ' it is in no sense a courtesy-book ; it is concerned with ' principles of social conduct rather than with details of ' etiquette.' This narrow distinction will hardly commend itself to other writers on such treatises ; and certainly

¹ *Galateo of Manners and Behaviours by Giovanni Della Casa*, 1914, Boston : Introduction by J. E. Spingarn.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

differs widely from what Rossetti tells us in his *Italian Courtesy Books*,¹ a work in which rightful prominence is given to the *Courtier*, though admitting that the *Galateo* may be accepted as a sequel to it. The main fact that emerges from all that Mr. Spingarn has to say is that he cannot have read Pettie's *Civile Conversation*. In this he is unfortunately not alone, too many writers on this topic having already passed the book by unopened.

Enough has probably been said with regard to the general nature of Pettie's work ; and as a short and excellent summary of its subjects and their divisions is set out on the title-page itself, any greater amplification is uncalled for here. There is one point, however, on which I may touch briefly in relation to a comparison between his book and one that has for so long now held an unrivalled position as chief of the Courtesy-books of both Italy and England, the *Courtier* of Sir Thomas Hoby. That point is Humour—whether shown by the author's natural gift in the selection of such merry tales as he thinks well to introduce, or by the happy phraseology made use of by the translator in the telling of some amusing incident. In both these respects I give the superior place to Guazzo and Pettie, for Castiglione's jests are too frequently derived straight from such classic writers as Cicero ; and they too often lose when Hoby is the *raconteur*. Not that Cicero had failed in his selection of witticisms—which, as we know from the *De Oratore*, were many and sometimes highly humorous—but that Castiglione had not made as

¹ See Early English Text Society, No. iii., 1868 (Extra Series).

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- good a selection from them and from other authors as he
DUCTION might have done; and that in Hobby's hands they get
somehow on the ponderous side, and leave a reader wonder-
ing at the want of humour in the ancients, or possibly in
the teller of the tales.

On the other hand, it seems to me that Pettie's idea of
what was funny springs rather from a natural gift than
from artificiality; and that it is more the humour of
Shakespeare's witty characters—of Touchstone, of Falstaff,
and others of the same school—than that of the more
polished and mordant jesters of a higher rank; which,
after all, is, as it ought to be, quite in accordance with
the dramatic proprieties of the dialogue in question,
where the principal players are in one case almost the
highest in the land, and in the other but members of
the middle or professional classes.

The Fourth Book, translated by Bartholomew Young
'out of Italian,' differs in many respects from the three
preceding sections. Oral instruction is done with; and
such teaching as is now to be given is taken up by a new
set of instructors who act the ceremonies, etiquette, and
manners prescribed in the earlier books, instead of lectur-
ing on them. For this reason Book iv. may be styled a
didactic comedy of high life.

It will be seen that at the end of Book II. William Guazzo
states: 'I understand that the last yere there were made
'in this citie certaine banquets, wherat were present divers
'Ladies and Gentlewomen of marke, and with them the
'most renowned Lord Vespasian Gonzaga, with others,
'amongst whom were used many discourses and devises,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

‘no lesse honest then pleasant.’ Whereupon Anniball says : INTRO-
DUCTION
‘I understoode the whole order of it by M. Botazzo which
‘was present, who hath faythfully registred them in his
‘excellent memorie, and they are wel worthy to be pub-
‘lished in print to the common profit, either by him or
‘some other writer.’ Guazzo replies : ‘I should thinke you
‘did me a singular pleasure, if it would please you before
‘my departure to make rehearsal therof unto mee.’ And
Anniball promises that he will not fail to do so. Accord-
ingly, when they meet on the fourth day, Anniball proceeds
with his task, explaining first that he means to omit a
good deal recorded by Botazzo, and select only ‘certaine
discourses and sportes’ which were made in the house
of Ladie Caterine Sacca del Ponte, on a winter’s night last
past. It is not certain whether Anniball brought with him
Botazzo’s manuscript account of the festivities, or only
selected portions of it. The title-page description of
Book iv. is, in the first edition of the *Civile Conversation*,
merely ‘The Report of a Banquet.’ The whole Book
presents an exceedingly well drawn picture of what may
be taken to be an average sample of an evening enter-
tainment in a noble house of Lombardy towards the close
of the sixteenth century.

We learn from Wood’s *Athenae Oxonienses*¹ that
Bartholomew Young, in addition to his version of Book iv.
of the *Civile Conversation*, translated from Spanish into
English *Diana of George of Montamayor*, London, 1598 ;
and that he spent about three years in Spain. He had
no less than twenty-seven pieces in *England’s Helicon*,

¹ See Bliss ed. (1813), col. 552 and 554.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- most of them, if not all, taken from his translation of
DUCTION *Diana*. He was evidently a good linguist, for we are told that he ‘performed in a shew in the Middle Temple, the part of a French orator.’ He resided at Ashhurst in Kent, and died there in 1621.

References to the *Civile Conversation* are few and far between in English literature from the time when the book was published. Amongst those who did refer to it was John Florio, who, in his *Second Frutes*, 1591, couples Castilion’s *Courtier* with Guazzo’s dialogues as the two most commonly read by those who wished to learn a little Italian; and in *A Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, he speaks of ‘well-forwarde Students, that have turned over Guazzo ‘and Castiglione.’ Gabriel Harvey, too, was a probable reader, for there is in the British Museum a copy of the corrected edition of *La Civile Conversatione*, Venice, 1581, with Harvey’s signature in autograph and a few notes in his handwriting. In Stow’s *Annales*, 1631, there is a curious reference to the *Civile Conversation*, which shows that public interest in the book was still alive at the time. The author, speaking of a woman in the Scriptures who had painted her face, quotes from his own translation of an ancient epigram :

‘It is in vaine (Madame) no Painter’s Art
Can Hecuba to Helena convert’;

and continues : ‘I like very well Stephano Guazzos censure thereof, and hold it to be a sentence worthy to be written in letters of gold that those women, whose beauties be naturall, are the faire creatures of God : But those

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

‘women which paint, and make themselves faire by Art,
‘are the creatures of the Devill.’¹

INTRO-
DUCTION

In 1738 a new translation of Guazzo's work was published anonymously, entitled ‘*The Art of Conversation*. In three parts. . . . Interspersed with many Foreign ‘Proverbs and Pleasant Stories. The Whole fitted to ‘Divert, Instruct, and Entertain Persons of every Taste, ‘Quality and Circumstance in Life. Written originally ‘in Italian, by M. Stephen Guazzo. Translated formerly into *French*, and now into *English*. London: for ‘J. Brett, at the Golden Ball . . . in the Strand. ‘MDCCXXXVIII.’ The ‘Proem’ is cut down a good deal, and the Fourth Book is omitted. The translation is much freer than Pettie's, and there are many interpolations—one of them six pages in length—which have no place in the original. The author (whose name I have not been able to discover) evidently made large use of Pettie's version, for he frequently adopts his actual words, and without any acknowledgment. His renderings of the poetical quotations are, as a rule, superior to those of Pettie, but some of them are taken too obviously from the original translation. Though this anonymous work seems to be but little known, the author is entitled to some distinction for being the only English writer who has given us any really definite information concerning the contents of so interesting a book of courtesy between George Pettie's time and the beginning of the present century.²

¹ See Appendix by Edmond Howes, p. 1085. There are two distinct references here to Pettie's translation: Bk. III. 12, line 9; and *ib.* 13, line 18.

² There is no mention of this author's translations of Dante in Dr. Toynbee's interesting work, *Dante in English Literature*, 1909.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

Francis Douce, the Shakespeare annotator, made two references to the work, neither of them of any great importance, about the year 1839, and then seems to have laid the book aside.¹

THE FRENCH TRANSLATIONS

As already mentioned, there were two translations into French which were published in 1579, the first by Gabriel Chappuys (Lyon, Beraud), the second by François de Belleforest (Paris, P. Cavellat). Each version was independent of the other. Both authors were well known at the time as writers of history, Belleforest having held the post of Historiographer Royal of France and a continuator of the *Grandes Chroniques*, up to the time of his death in 1583, when he was succeeded by Chappuys in that office. Belleforest was also the chief translator of Bandello's *Novelle* (1568-1570). Chappuys also translated Castiglione's *Courtier* into French in 1580. Each of these first French versions of the *Civile Conversation* was reprinted three times before 1609: they are both of considerable rarity. There is no copy of either translation, in any edition, in the British Museum.

There is little to choose between the two versions. That of Belleforest is perhaps the more literal of the two, and it contains a good many passages omitted in that of Chappuys. This, however, may have been because the two authors happened to use different editions of the Italian text; for I find that Guazzo did make additions

¹ See *post*, Shakespeare section, *As You Like It*.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

to his original work, and these appeared in the Venice editions of 1580. Apart altogether from merely bibliographical considerations, the matter becomes an interesting one when we try to discover which of the two translations was used by George Pettie when turning the work into English. INTRO-
DUCTION

It has already been mentioned ¹ that, when seeking the licence of the Stationers' Company, he handed in, through Watkins his printer, a copy of Chappuys' work as the book 'to be translated.' This, however, is not absolute proof that he confined himself to Chappuys' version, for he *may* afterwards have consulted that of Belleforest. But, though he makes no direct statement on the subject, Pettie gives us a clue, the employment of which, coupled with the other evidence, is, I think, sufficient to settle the question. At the end of the Preface to the Readers (page 12) he writes: 'I have supplied divers things out of the Italian original, which were left out by the French translator. . . . I have included the places within two starres, as you may see throughout the Booke.'²

Using the hint given here, I have examined a number of the starred passages in Pettie's version, and, having found that they are nearly all omitted in Chappuys, while they are included in Belleforest, *and* in the later editions of Guazzo's Italian text, I conclude that Chappuys' was the French translation which Pettie must have used.

Another interesting fact became clear in the examination.

¹ See p. xvii, *ante*.

² These stars are preserved in the reprint of Pettie's translation—*i.e.* Books I., II., and III.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Some of the starred passages were not found in the first
DUCTION (1574) or second (1575) editions of Guazzo's Italian, and they were also left out by *both* French translators. But they do appear in the Venice edition of Guazzo of 1580, the title-page of which describes the work as 'recently 'corrected by the author himself and augmented in divers 'places with many useful and pleasing additions.' This, then, must have been the Italian edition used by Pettie when supplying the omissions of Chappuys.¹

GEORGE PETTIE AND SHAKESPEARE

The *Civile Conversation* was published when Shakespeare was seventeen years old, and shortly before his coming to London. It is extremely likely that his attention was drawn to the work about the time when he first put a 'prentice hand to the refurbishing of old plays, and certainly before he began to write his first original comedy.

If only for its insight into Italian life and manners, the *Civile Conversation* was a volume that would have been studied with no little care by any playwright of the time who, never having visited Italy, contemplated the production of a drama the scenes and characters of which were to be cast in an Italian mould. But this was by no means its sole attraction. The description already given of the general nature of the contents of the volume, its admirable style, its quiet humour, the attractiveness

¹ It is perhaps worth mentioning that both of these French translators show a curious pride in their place of birth, the one giving his name as Gabriel Chappuys Tourangeau (of Tours), and the other as F. Belleforest Commingeois (of Comminges).

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

and ease of its power of expression, the genuine tone of its morality, and, above all, the dramatic force of its dialogue form, provided a combination so exactly suited to the needs of a playwright, whether his scene were at home or abroad, that none can wonder at its being a book to draw even Shakespeare to a study of its pages. He may have read it only once—though I fancy the evidence is rather the other way, and, anyhow, we know his memory was prodigious. His own description of young Posthumus Leonatus was possibly but a picture of himself :

‘ The King he takes the babe

To his protection . . .

Puts him to all the learnings that his time

Could make him the receiver of ; which he took,

As we do air, fast as ’twas minister’d.’

(*Cymbeline*, 1. i. 40 sq.)

We know that Shakespeare never hesitated to make use of the labour of other writers, their jests, their expressions, their allusions, their turns of thought, their recorded experiences, and their knowledge, when in a mind to do so. The practice was common and recognised amongst the brotherhood of actors and playwrights of the time.¹ One of the few protests against the custom that has reached us from Tudor times is that peevish outburst of jealousy which Robert Greene launched against ‘ the only Shake-scene in a country ’ for trying to oust a once popular writer from a position which his own misguided conduct had already reduced to insignificance. The very nature of Shakespeare’s borrowing was such as

¹ See Hart in Introduction, 2 *Hen.* vi. p. 51, Arden edition.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

to close the mouth of protest: what he borrowed for convenience he paid back in beauty; and it is easy to conceive that the writers from whom he borrowed were more pleased than ruffled at the luminous advertisement bestowed on them by the master dramatic embellisher of his age. Take but two out of many examples that might be cited:—(a) a passage from North's *Plutarch*: 'it was 'the custome of Rome at that time, that such as dyd sue 'for any office, should for certen dayes before be in the 'market-place, *only with a poor gowne on their backes,*' and mark how it emerges from Shakespeare's pen:

'BRUTUS:

I heard him swear,

Were he to stand for consul, never would he

Appear i' the market-place, nor on him put

The napless vesture of humility;

(*Coriolanus*, II. i. 247.)

and (b) a passage from Holinshed's *Chronicles*—on which *Macbeth* was founded: 'For the pricke of conscience . . . 'caused him ever to feare lest he should be served of 'the same cup, as he had ministered to his predecessor,' which Mr. J. Churton Collins thought was reproduced by Shakespeare as:

'this even-handed justice

Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice

To our own lips.'

(*Macbeth*, I. vii. 10-12.)

In other respects, too, Shakespeare followed the habit of the period. Early in his dramatic career, led by other eminent playwrights, he became infected with a leaning to Italy and Italian stories. He must have resorted many times to books for the information he needed, though, naturally enough, some of that information may have

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO-
DUCTION

been gathered, as it were, in the street, or at the Ordinary. John Florio, too, with whose remarkable dictionary, *Queen Anna's New World of Words* (1611), he was so familiarly acquainted, may have taught him much; while another informant, his fellow-actor, Robert Armin, must surely have contributed to his knowledge—himself a good Italian scholar, and one who had the signal honour afterwards of being left a sum of money under his friend Shakespeare's will, wherewith to buy himself a memorial ring. What more likely, then, than that Shakespeare should seek to supplement the information he had already gleaned by going to such a work as the *Civile Conversation*? It is even possible that John Florio himself may have been the one who suggested that he should do so.

I have attempted elsewhere to show that Shakespeare was well acquainted with Pettie's translation,¹ and that he used his recollections of it with much freedom in many of his works; and although unwilling to dogmatise on such a subject, I suggest with some confidence that the parallels to which I am about to draw attention are so numerous, and are found so continuously through nearly the whole of Shakespeare's plays, that they cannot be accounted for on any rational basis of explanation without assuming that Shakespeare was a borrower from the *Civile Conversation*.

Professor Warwick Bond has already clearly shown the extensive use that Shakespeare made of Lyly's works;²

¹ See *Nineteenth Century and After*, Feb. 1904: 'A Forgotten Volume in Shakespeare's Library.'

² See *Complete Works of John Lyly*, 1902, vol. i.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Mr. John M. Robertson has given many examples of the
DUCTION poet's borrowings from Montaigne;¹ while Dr. A. W. Ward has tabulated the numerous passages in which Shakespeare's *Shylock* has followed Marlowe's *Barabas*.²

Illustrative commentaries on Shakespeare's works abound with quotations from earlier and contemporary writers, and many interesting parallels are pointed to with a view to showing that the national poet had made himself a debtor to authors, great and small, with whose works he had an opportunity of making himself acquainted; but, for all the erudition of the commentators in this direction, I think it would be difficult to name any *one* work, from which Shakespeare is supposed to have borrowed, that contains a larger number of suggestive parallels than Pettie's *Civile Conversation*.

Sir Walter Raleigh, in his highly interesting account of the *Courtier*,³ raises a question that many Shakespearian scholars must at times have put to themselves: Why did Shakespeare make so little use of that famous book? It has been described as 'the greatest Curtesy-Book in the world': it embraced all that was best in Italian society: the English version by Hoby was a veritable classic in our literature: it was lying ready within Shakespeare's reach, capable of supplying much of the information in which the young dramatist was deeply interested: it was talked of much, and praised wherever mentioned: and yet, as Professor Raleigh himself admits, 'it is not

¹ See *Montaigne and Shakespeare*, 1909.

² See *History of English Dramatic Literature*, 1899, i. 346.

³ *Op. cit.* p. lxxix.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

clear that Shakespeare knew the *Courtier*—meaning, of course, that there is little of Hoby's translation to be met with in the works of Shakespeare. Sir Walter refers to a few distantly similar thoughts which were shared by the two great writers, but attaches little importance to them; and the best reason he can suggest for this apparently unaccountable omission on Shakespeare's part is that perhaps 'the *Courtier* was a book too widely read to furnish comic surprises' in drama. One cannot help feeling that had Sir Walter known the *Civile Conversation* he would at once have recognised the stronger attraction that that volume must have had for Shakespeare, as a treatise on a *less* courtly kind of life, a life lived by folk of a more genuine, human, and everyday type, though one in which occasional glimpses of a higher society were not altogether excluded. In this respect it is a fact worthy of notice that the parallels I am about to cite are infinitely fewer from the Fourth Book than from any of the others—that being the section which more closely approaches the character of Castiglione's work.

The Shakespeare plays here following are set out in alphabetical order.

All's Well that Ends Well.

At Act II. ii. 41 we read: 'I will be a fool in question, hoping to be the wiser by your answer.' While Pettie has: 'Of the wise thou shalt learne to make thy selfe better, of fooles, to make thy selfe more advised' (Bk. II. 117).

When the King reprimands Bertram for his unwillingness

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- to marry the virtuous Helena on account of her lowly birth,
DUCTION he says :

‘ that is honour’s scorn
Which challenges itself as honour’s born,
And is not like the sire. (II. iii. 135-7.)

And Pettie gives us : ‘ these halfe Gentlemen, who beeing
‘ not by nature indued with any vertue, make boast of the
‘ woorthinesse of their auncestours, are to be laughed at ’
(Bk. II. 177-8).

The King continues his speech with :

‘ honours thrive
When rather from our acts we them derive
Than our foregoers.’ (Ib. 137-9.)

And in the same spirit Pettie writes : ‘ not considering
‘ how we deserve no prayse for that, which God or Nature
‘ hath bestowed upon us, but only for that, which we
‘ purchace by our owne industry ’;¹ and again later :
‘ gentry by byrth costeth you nothing, but that you have
‘ it by succession, mary gentry by vertue you have gotten
‘ hardly, having first passed thorowe the pykes, and a
‘ thousande daungers ’ (Bk. II. 178); and three pages later :
‘ Another Philosopher affirmeth likewise, that it is in vaine
‘ called gentry, whiche referring it selfe to the worthinesse
‘ of blood, is not ours, but others ’ (Bk. II. 181).

In fact, in this speech of the King—about twenty lines
in length—there is hardly a sentiment or sentence the
prototype of which is not to be found in the *Civile
Conversation*.

¹ Preface to the Readers, p. 8.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

As You Like It.

INTRO-
DUCTION

In this play there are many striking echoes of Pettie's work. To begin with, when Oliver dismisses the aged Adam his words are : ' Get you with him, you old dog.' To which the old man replies : ' Is " old dog " my reward ? Most true. I have lost my teeth in your service' (i. i. 87-9). There is a singular similarity between this and a passage in Bk. iv. 119-20, where the question is raised as to who should go out so as to avoid having more than nine present at a banquet. An old Lord Cane, punning on his own name, suggests that ' the unprofitable Dogge ' should be the one to leave. Another pleads for him as being likely to prove a ' watchfull keeper of this flocke.' ' I could yet barke,' replies the old man, ' but for my biting, ' or wounding, these Ladies esteeme not a rush, knowing, ' that by reason of my olde age, I have neither teethe in ' my mouth, nor strength in my pawes.'

Charles the wrestler, speaking of the exiled Duke and his companions, says they ' fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world ' (i. i. 127). He means, of course, ' the golden age.' Pettie had also used the former phrase, ' the golden world being gone ' (Bk. III. 101).

The very well known

' All the world 's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players :

And one man in his time plays many parts . . .'
(II. vii. 139 *sqq.*)

has been traced to many sources, both Latin and English. Shakespeare repeats the main idea in *The Merchant of*

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

Venice : ‘ A stage where every man must play a part,’ but, in its more developed form, it was, I think, more likely to have been borrowed from the *Civile Conversation* than from any other work : ‘ Another used likewyse to say, that ‘ this world was a stage, wee the players whiche present ‘ the Comedie . . . and that wee whiche are the players, ‘ are in a manner all of us given to play those partes ‘ whiche you have spoken of ’¹ (Bk. II. 118).

When Touchstone seeks to overwhelm Corin by sheer force of logic, he does it in this way : ‘ Why, if thou never ‘ wast at court, thou never sawest good manners ; if thou ‘ never sawest good manners, then thy manners must be ‘ wicked ; and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. ‘ Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd ’ (III. i. 42 *sqq.*). Both in thought and in form of reasoning, the sentence seems to be closely related to the following : ‘ A man ‘ cannot be a right man without Conversation. For he ‘ that useth not company hath no experience, he that hath ‘ no experience, hath no judgement, and hee that hath no ‘ judgement, is no better then a beast ’ (Bk. I. 47) ; while later on we read : ‘ ANNIE. This Countrey surely ‘ in my opynion, bringeth foorth no good servingmen. ‘ GUAZ. I thinke the cause of it is, for that in this ‘ place Princes sieldome keepe their Courtes where ‘ Servingmen cheefelye learne good behaviour ’ (Bk. III. 107).

¹ Francis Douce has noticed this parallel in his *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, 1839, and has also quoted one other passage from Pettie’s *Guazzo* bearing on the verses on Timon’s tomb (*Civile Conversation*, Bk. I. 21). It is difficult to understand how so vigilant and laborious a student of Elizabethan literature failed to go further in his study of this interesting work of Pettie.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

This play also has—

INTRO-
DUCTION

‘ If the cat will after kind,
So be sure will Rosalind ’; (III. ii. 110.)

suggested perhaps by Pettie’s ‘remembring the saying,
‘that the Eagle breedeth not the Pigeon, but that Cat
‘will after kynde’ (Bk. III. 15).

Closely following comes a phrase of Touchstone’s which has perplexed some of the commentators so much that copious emendation has been suggested of the First Folio reading, ‘ranke’: ‘I’ll rhyme you so, eight years together . . . it is the right Butter-women’s ranke to market’ (III. ii. 102). Pettie, however, removes all difficulty, for he not only uses the word objected to, but tells us what it means: ‘All the women in the towne runne thyther of a ranke, as it were in procession’ (Bk. III. 77).

When Touchstone exclaims to Audrey: ‘I would the gods had made thee poetical,’ her answer is: ‘I do not know what poetical is. Is it honest in deed and word?’ ‘No, truly,’ replies the Clown, ‘for the truest poetry is ‘the most feigning,’ and so forth (III. iii. 17 *sq.*). But Guazzo had led the way, in saying, ‘In my minde it may ‘be saide, that these professours of eloquence, under the ‘colour of an Oratour, playe the parte of a Poet: and by ‘the feigning of woordes, shewe the little plaine dealing ‘that is in them’ (Bk. I. 124).

Pettie in his Preface (p. 10) uses some strong words against ‘those traveylers abroad’—as he styles them—and ‘their contemning of their Countrey fashions, their ‘apish imitation of every outlandish Asse in their gestures, ‘behaviour, and apparell’ . . . ‘as I myselfe have heard

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'some of them, they report abroad, that our Countrey is
DUCTION 'barbarous, our maners rude, and our people uncivile.'
Where else but here did Rosalind find so good a model for
her 'Farewell, Monsieur Traveller: look you lisp, and
'wear strange suits, disable all the benefits of your own
'country, be out of love with your nativity,' etc. ?

In Act iv. Sc. i. 178, Rosalind in a playful spirit warns
her lover on the subject of unfaithfulness: 'O! that
'woman that cannot make her fault her husband's occa-
'sion, let her never nurse her child herself, for she will
'breed it like a fool.' The phrase 'her husband's occa-
'sion' is by no means free from difficulty, but the following
passage would seem to give the real explanation, as well as
showing that Shakespeare had it in his mind when he wrote
the lines: 'And if perchance the husbände have some
'occasion given him to mistrust, let him examine his owne
'life well, and he shall finde that the *occasion* came by him
'selfe, and that he hath not used her as he ought to have
done' (Bk. III. 23).

If we had no other evidence that Shakespeare was
familiar with the books of Etiquette of his day, Touch-
stone's remark in Act v. would establish the fact that
he was:

'JAQUES. Can you nominate in order now the degrees¹ of
the lie ?

'TOUCH. O sir, we quarrel in print; by the book, as you have
books for good manners.' (Sc. iv. 94 *sqq.*)

The author of those lines was surely thinking of the
Civile Conversation here, and more particularly of that

¹ Touchstone had previously mentioned that their number was seven.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

portion of it which runs as follows : ‘ Nowe touching the
‘ unnoble or yeomen . . . many of them have an infirmitie
‘ more greevous and pernicious then any before rehearsed :
‘ which is, that they will not acknowledge and confesse
‘ themselves inferiour to Gentlemen, both by nature,
‘ fortune, and vertue : not knowing that amongst *the seven*
‘ *degrees of superioritie*, this is particularly set downe of
‘ Gentlemen over the baser sorte, who by all reason ought
‘ to submitte themselves to their will and pleasure ’
(Bk. II. 195).

Comedy of Errors.

In this play the Duke, believing that every one present had gone mad, exclaims : ‘ I think you all have drunk of Circe’s cup ’ (v. i. 271). I can find no parallel to the phrase ‘ Circe’s cup.’ It does not occur in Golding’s *Metamorphoses*, where the home of Circe is fully described, as also the mixing of the potion. Pettie, however, uses it : ‘ Yea, wee must deale so warily in the matter, that it
‘ may bee said that wee have been in the very jawes of
‘ Scilla, and *drunke of Cyrces cup* . . . ’ (Bk. II. 245-6); and this is plainly the source from which Shakespeare took the words.

Again, in the same play we have—

‘ O, train me not, sweet *mermaid*, with thy note ’ (III. ii. 45).
and—

‘ I ’ll stop mine ears against the *mermaid’s* song ’ (*ib.* 166).

This early term for ‘ siren ’ was by no means common, but Pettie uses it : ‘ to stop his eares, as Uliesses did against the song of the Marmaides ’ (Bk. I. 52). It

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- should be stated, however, that Florio's Dictionary, 1611,
DUCTION gives 'Siréna, a Syren, a Mermaide.'

Coriolanus.

When Guazzo's dialogue turns on gentle and courteous speech, Anniball remarks: 'Yet woulde I have every one
'keepe that majestie and state whiche is due to his estate.
'For to bee too popular and plausible, were to make
'largesse of the treasures of his curtesie . . .' (Bk. II. 158).
And this is the very keynote of what Shakespeare makes
Coriolanus say to the Third and Fourth Citizens in Act II.
Sc. iii.: 'I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some
popular man, and give it bountifully to the desirers.'
The echo of Pettie's phrasing is here no doubt decked
with the embroidery that came so readily from the drama-
tist when adapting some other writer's words; in which
respect it closely resembles 'the napless vesture of
humility' already referred to in this Introduction.

Cymbeline.

In *Cymbeline* II. iv. 147 we have an extremely rare once-
word of Shakespeare, *i.e.* limb-meal—no example of it is
given in the *New English Dictionary* between 1485 and
1590:

'O, that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal.'

And in Pettie is found: 'there are many which will not
sticke to teare him limme meale' (Bk. I. 60).

Hamlet.

Hamlet furnishes some very remarkable parallels between
Shakespeare and Pettie; and of such a character that it

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

seems impossible to believe that they are the result of mere coincidence. In the third act we have : INTRO-
DUCTION

' HAMLET. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

OPHELIA. My lord ?

HAMLET. Are you fair ?

OPHELIA. What means your lordship ?

HAMLET. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

OPHELIA. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ? '

And Pettie gives us the following :

' Ad hereto that bewty breedeth temptation, temptation dishonour : for it is a matter almost impossible, and sieldome seene, that those two great enimies, bewty and honesty agree together . . . And though it fall out often that bewty and honesty are joyned together, yet it falleth out sieldome, but that exquisite bewty is had in suspition ' (Bk. III. 10-11).

On the next page of Pettie we find :

' Those which use artificial means, displease God much, in altring his image, and please men never a whit, in going about to deceive them. I know no man of judgement, but setteth more, by ods, by a naturall bewty that sheweth but meanly, then by a painted artificial bewty that shineth most gallantly ' (*ib.* 11).

Then, a page further on :

' We will maintayne then, that a woman taking away and changing the coolour and complexion which God hath given her, taketh unto her that which belongeth to a harlot ' (*ib.* 13).

Compare with these extracts Hamlet's words : ' I have heard of your paintings too, well enough : God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another ' (III. i.).

Again, when the Danish prince asserts : ' Be thou as

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape
DUCTION 'calumny' (*ib.*), Pettie had already written: 'I never
'yet hitherunto knewe man so good and vertuous, which
'had not been subject to the malice and slaunders of
'some one' (Bk. I. 106).

In a smaller way, we may compare Hamlet's 'Denmark's
a prison . . . To me it is a prison' (II. ii.) with Pettie's
'The Citie is to me a prison' (Bk. I. 27).

On the subject of 'the gift of good delivery of speech,'
and all that appertains to it, there are some most excellent
admonitions contained in the dialogue at pages 128-32
of the Second Book. The extracts set out here are but
examples of these instructions:

'It is muche in my opinion to keepe a certaine majestie in
the jesture, which speaketh as it were by using silence, and
constraineth as it were by way of commaundement the hearers,
to have it in admiration and reverence. Yet herein is required
such a moderation, that a man with too litle be not immoveable
like an image, neither with too much, too busie like an Ape . . .
it is necessarie to use a meane, that the pronuntiation be neither
too swift nor too slow . . . and therefore wee must speake
freely, without supping up our woordes . . . We must likewise
take heede we speake not out of the throate, like one that
hath some meate in his mouth which is too hotte . . . Lastly,
the voyce must be neither fainte like one that is sicke . . .
neither shrill nor loud like a crier . . . [one should avoid] a
playerlike kinde of lightnesse, whereby hee getteth discom-
mendation . . . and see the woordes agree to the jesture . . .
neither likewise doe I thinke it meete to admonishe the hearer
to take heede . . . of whispering in any others eare, of laughing
without occasion . . . of shewing him selfe greeved at the
speakers woordes . . . wee must imitate those which neither
Saintlike are too ceremonious, neither Jugglerlike are too

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

quicke and too full of action . . . So great agreement is there
betweene the words and the countenance, and the countenance
and the wordes.’

INTRO-
DUCTION

No Shakespearian student can read these extracts—
and a good deal more that will be found in the text—
without at once being reminded of Hamlet’s address to
the Players :

‘ Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you,
trippingly on the tongue ; but if you mouth it . . . I had as
lief the town-crier spoke my lines . . . but use all gently ; for
in the very torrents, tempest . . . you must acquire and beget
a temperance that may give it smoothness. . . . Be not too
tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor ; suit
the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this
special observance, that you o’erstep not the modesty of
nature. . . . Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it
make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve ’
(III. ii.).

At page 169 of Bk. II., Anniball remarks : ‘ And there-
fore in my opinion, those young men which eschue the
‘ companie of old, hyde their woundes, and make them
‘ to fester inwardly.’ Hamlet, in a like vein, says :

‘ It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen.’ (III. iv.)

It is worth noting here that Guazzo’s original has the
words ‘ *le rendono ulcerose*,’ which would seem to suggest
that Shakespeare occasionally consulted the Italian
version.¹

¹ See *The Nineteenth Century and After*, Jan. and Feb. 1918, in which
the present writer maintains that Shakespeare’s knowledge of Italian was
a good deal more extensive than the trivial acquaintance with that language
generally attributed to him.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- I have not yet come across any Shakespearian critic
DUCTION who has ventured to give us the name of the book that Hamlet is reading when Polonius interrupts him in Act II. Sc. ii. with his 'What do you read, my lord?' It is true that Warburton suggested the Tenth Satire of Juvenal; but his quotation from that author does not go far towards confirming the guess. Be that as it may, the Prince replies :

'Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : . . . for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.'

Hamlet ends the interview with a muttered 'These tedious old fools !'

When we find in Pettie's *Guazzo* such words as : ' But ' I wil say unto you, that many olde folke complaine without ' cause, that their age is smally regarded or reverenced, ' and perswade themselves, for that they *have a whyte beard*, for that they are bald, *bleareyed*, toothless, crooked, ' *trembling*, . . . and many of them see not *how voide they are of understanding* . . . wee see some olde doating fooles, who notwithstanding they feele *their legges feeble and ' trembling under them*, and see in their glasse *their whyte heares*,' closely followed by : ' Let us nowe make an ende ' of this matter, advising olde men to suffer their minde ' to waxe olde together with their bodie . . . and when ' they are arived to their ende, *not to seeke to turne backe* . . . ' (Bk. II. 172-3), we can then begin to see that there is no
liv

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

insuperable difficulty in believing that the actual volume in the hands of Prince Hamlet was the *Civile Conversation* and no other. INTRO-
DUCTION

Further evidence of borrowing by the dramatist is afforded by Hamlet's interview with Osric in Act v. Sc. ii. When this too courtly courtier, bearing a message from the King, removes his cap before the Danish Prince, Hamlet bids him to put his bonnet to his right use, adding, ' 'tis for the head.' 'I thank your lordship,' Osric replies, ' 'tis very hot,' and more to the same effect. The origin of this excuse is surely to be found in Pettie's *Guazzo* :

'I will not say unto you, that for one which hath a good grace in these ceremonies, there are a thousand whom it becommeth so ill to use them, that it will make you sicke at the heart to see it. . . . As I have seene some talking with the Duke my maister, and seeing him bare headed, have taken his arme with both their handes, and made him put on his hat ANNIB. He should have put it of againe, to have shewed that he was not bare in respect of them, *but because of the heate*' (Bk. II. 165).

At Act III. Sc. iv. is, 'Thus bad begins and worse remains behind'; with which compare 'that a thing ill begun, will come to a worse ende' (Bk. III. 47).

A good example of Shakespeare's transforming power is shown in his adaptation of Guazzo's somewhat commonplace 'this your rule is rather praysed then practised' (Bk. III. 24). In *Hamlet* it becomes, 'It is a custom More 'honour'd in the breach than the observance.'

Hamlet in 'the Queen's apartment' protests against the idea that he is mad, and his words to the Queen are :

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

‘ Ecstasy !

*My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have uttered ’ :* (III. iv. 139-142.)

and Pettie’s *Guazzo* (Bk. III. 113) reads :

‘ for our Galen sayth, The disquiet of the minde breedeth the disease of the bodye : and that he hath cured many diseases by bringing *the pulses into good temper*, and by quieting the minde.’

Where did the author of *Hamlet* find this learned medical opinion but in the *Civile Conversation* ?

In connection with the same scene, one of the speakers (in Bk. iv. 164) says : ‘ The superfluous and disordinate ‘ appetite which doth in a manner burne, and consume ‘ many men to nothing . . . and so oftentimes make us ‘ fall into that pittifull misfortune, that on a time befell ‘ to waxe, which being greatlie troubled to see her selfe ‘ soft and melted with heat, perceiving bricke and tiles ‘ to be hardned and baked in the fire, cast it selfe into the ‘ hot furnace, where it was melted to nothing in the end.’ Shakespeare would seem to have remembered this passage when making Hamlet say to his mother :

‘ Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron’s bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire.’ (III. iv. 82 *sqq.*)

It is noteworthy that a similar train of thought is used by Mrs. Ford in *The Merry Wives* : ‘ I think the best ‘ way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire ‘ of lust have melted him in his own grease ’ (II. i. 67).

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

2 *Henry IV.*

INTRO- DUCTION

In 2 *Henry IV.*, when the disguised Prince sees the aged Falstaff making love to Doll Tearsheet, he exclaims to Poins: ‘Saturn and Venus this year in conjunction! What says the almanack to that?’ (II. iv. 286).

Where but in the *Civile Conversation* did the author come by this astronomical sentiment? Pettie’s words are: ‘And as Venus and Saturne are at continual warre ‘the one with the other, so the old coupled with the yong, ‘never agree together’ (Bk. III. 5).

Falstaff himself too, in his moments of philosophical reflection, seems as it were to have dipped into the same volume: ‘It is certain,’ he says, ‘that either wise bearing, ‘or ignorant carriage, is caught as men take diseases one ‘of another: therefore let men take heed of their company’ (v. i. 84)—for Pettie had already written: ‘yet I will ‘say further that it is true, that as some diseases of the ‘body are infectious, so the vices of the mind take from ‘one to another, so that a drunkard draweth his com- ‘panions to love wine, a Carpet knight corrupteth and ‘effeminateth a valiant man: and so much force hath con- ‘tinual conversation, that oft times against our wils, we ‘imitate the vices of others’ (Bk. I. 44).

Henry V.

In *Henry V.* III. v., the Constable asks:

‘Where have they this mettle?

Is not their climate foggy, raw, and dull . . .’;

while Pettie had already written: ‘And as good and ‘sharpe wittes flourishe where the ayre is pure and subtile,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'so there are founde dull and grosse heads where the ayre
DUCTION 'is foggie and thicke' (Bk. I. 64).

'The Gordian knot' is found here (I. i. 46), and also in *Cymbeline*. It was a rarely used phrase at the time, the *New English Dictionary* giving one example only before Shakespeare, and quoted from a work not likely to have been read by him. Pettie has the phrase: 'and so long as
'the bonde of brotherhood is knit in such sort, it may wel
'be sayd that the sword which undid Gordians knot, shal
'not be able to undoo it' (Bk. III. 89).

1 Henry VI.

Suffolk says:

'So worthless peasants bargain for their wives,
As market-men for oxen, sheep, or horse.' (v. v. 53.)

And in quite the same spirit one of the speakers in the *Civile Conversation* remarks: 'Fyrste, wee are to reproove
'the abuse of men, who in choosing a Wife, use no other
'order then they doe in buying a Horse, for the buyer
'will bee sure to pry into everye parte, whether hee bee
'sounde of winde, and limme . . .' (Bk. III. 14).

2 Henry VI.

The Duchess of Gloucester thus addresses the King:

'Good king, look to 't in time; . . .
Though in this place most master *wear no breeches*,
She shall not strike Dame Eleanor unrevenged.'

(I. iii. 143 *sqq.*)

The same phrase is repeated in 3 Henry VI. v. v. 24, though in an altered form:

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

‘ That you might still have worn the petticoat,
And ne’er have stol’n the breech from Lancaster ’ ;

INTRO-
DUCTION

while the *Civile Conversation* contains the following :

‘ but suche wives neede not make boast of their sufficiencie :
for at this day the race of the Spartane women is worne out,
and therefore it is best for them to be content, to let their
husbandes weare the breeches ” (Bk. III. 29).

Again, in Act III. i. 170 we have

‘ A staff is quickly found to beat a dog,’

of which Hart, with all his knowledge of the literature of the time, tells us (Arden edition, note), ‘ I have only one earlier example, from Udall’s *Diotrephes*, 1588.’ I can hardly think that this was a likely place for Shakespeare to find the proverbial phrase, and prefer to believe that he met with it in Pettie’s work, where he might have read it twice : ‘ It is an easie matter to finde a staffe to beate a dog ’ (Bk. III. 50) ; and again, ‘ A staffe is sone found to beate a dog ’ (Bk. IV. 120) ; the latter example being all but identical with Shakespeare’s wording.

In the next act (IV. VII. 80), Lord Say, answering Cade, speaks as follows :

‘ Great men have reaching hands : oft have I struck
Those that I never saw, and struck them dead.’

And here is what seems to me to have been its origin :

‘ ANNIB. Those which dare abuse Princes seeme never to
‘ have read that verse,

‘ Knowest not, that Princes hands will reach a great way of.

‘ . . . They knowe not also that Princes partake with the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'devine power, being able to pull downe the mighty and
DUCTION 'to set up the weake' (Bk. II. 199-200).

Professor Bond suggests that Shakespeare borrowed here from Lyly's *Euphues*: 'Knowest thou not Euphues that kings have long armes and rulers large reches' [or reaches] (vol. i. 221, 35), but the words which accompany the verse in Pettie's translation, coupled with the other borrowings already mentioned, would seem to refute the suggestion.

At Act v. i. 36, Shakespeare makes mention of Atlas for the first and only time: 'Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight.' If the illustration came to him from reading a book in which he must have been interested, he probably derived it from Pettie's description: 'the shouldders of Atlas wherewith he staid up heaven' (Bk. I. 49). It is true that Nashe mentions Atlas, and his upholding heaven, earlier than the date at which *2 Henry VI.* was written; but inasmuch as Shakespeare does not appear to have borrowed to any great extent from Nashe, we may fairly conclude that it was George Pettie who was his informant here.

In Act v. i. 100 are the lines:

'Whose smile and frown, like to Achilles' spear,
Is able with the change to kill and cure.'

There is little evidence, however, of any widespread knowledge of the myth in or about the time the play was composed (1591-92), except what Pettie's *Guazzo* supplies: 'You have in your hands the weapons of Achilles, with 'the which you both wound and heale': (Bk. I. 17). It is true that Malone, hesitatingly supported by Hart,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

suggests that Greene's *Orlando Furioso* was the origin of Shakespeare's information here; but it has yet to be shown that Greene's work was really of earlier date than the play in question.

INTRO-
DUCTION

3 Henry VI.

The word 'type' in the very rare sense of 'distinguishing mark or badge' occurs in *3 Henry VI.* :

'Thy father bears the type of King of Naples' (I. iv. 121).

The *New English Dictionary* quotes only two examples of it earlier than 1613, and both from Shakespeare. He probably found it in the *Civile Conversation* (Bk. II. 139) : 'hee which seeketh to reache the very toppe and type of 'glory . . .'

In Bk. I. 18 is the following passage : 'and as hidden 'flames by force kept downe are most ardent, so these 'corrupt humours, covertly lurking, with more force 'consume, and destroy *the faire pallace of your minde.*' It is not easy to believe that the author of *3 Henry VI.* had not this sentence in his mind when he made Edward (son of the Duke of York whose death had just been announced) address his brother Richard in these words :

'Now *my soul's palace* is become a prison' :

and, a few lines later, made Richard break out with :

'I cannot weep, for all my body's moisture
Scarce serves to quench my furnace-burning heart :
Nor can my tongue unload my heart's great burthen ;
For self-same wind, that I should speak withal,
Is kindling coals that fire all my breast,
And burn me up with flames, that tears would quench.'

(II. i. 74-84.)

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Similarly in *Lucrece* is, ' his soul's fair temple is defaced '
DUCTION (719).

King John.

Anniball when discussing people who speak ill of the dead mentions a proverb : ' And of these, this saying ' rose, That the Lion being dead, the verie Hares triumph ' over him ' (Bk. 1. 73). This may be the origin of Shakespeare's more elaborate version in *King John* :

' You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,
Whose valour plucks dead lions by the beard ' : (II. i. 137.)

while in the same play Salisbury's lines (v. iv. 5),

' That misbegotten devil, Faulconbridge,
In spite of spite, alone upholds the day,'

and a repetition of the phrase in *3 Henry VI.* II. iii. 5,

' And spite of spite needs must I rest awhile,'

would both seem to be echoes of Pettie's words : ' and you ' wil say that spight it selfe can not deface her doings any ' way, and that in spight of spight shee will triumph over ' all yll tongues ' (Bk. II. 201).

Julius Cæsar.

There is the scene in which genuine friendship is contrasted with ceremonious regard :

' BRUTUS. He is not doubted. A word, Lucilius :
How he receiv'd you, let me be resolv'd.

LUCILIUS. With curtesy and with respect enough ;
But not with such familiar instances,
Nor with such free and friendly conference,
As he hath us'd of old.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

BRUTUS.

Thou hast describ'd

INTRO-
DUCTION

A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,

When love begins to sicken and decay,

It useth an enforced ceremony.

There are no tricks in plain and simple faith.'

(iv. ii. 13-22.)

If we compare with this the views expressed by Anniball which precede Guazzo's reply : ' I allowe the reasons ' alleadged by you to maintaine Ceremonies, but I will say ' unto you, that they ought to bee observed rather amongst ' strangers, then familiar friendes. For if I bee not deceived, ' true friendship can away neither with Ceremonious wordes ' nor deedes' (Bk. II. 166), it will be difficult to believe that Shakespeare was not drawing on his recollection of the *Civile Conversation* ; and still more so when we take the very next lines of Shakespeare :

' But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,

Make gallant show and promise of their mettle ;

But when they should endure the bloody spur,

They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,

Sink in the trial :

(iv. ii. 23-27.)

which are obviously but a Shakespearian embellishment of Pettie's simpler words : ' by too much spurring, the horse is made dull ' (Bk. II. 134).

With the concluding portion of Guazzo's statement one may also compare *Timon of Athens*, I. ii. 15-18 :

' Nay, my lords, ceremony was but devis'd at first

To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes,

.

But where there is true friendship, there needs none.'

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO-
DUCTION *King Lear.*

A considerable portion of the Third Book of the *Guazzo* dialogue relates to the father's bearing to a son, and *vice versa*, a topic that enters largely into the play of *King Lear*, in connection with Edmund's crafty denunciation of his brother Edgar as one who was basely seeking to usurp their father's authority. Edmund's concocted letter, which Gloucester intercepts, runs in these words: 'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered' (i. ii. 50). And some lines later, Edmund replying to a question put by Gloucester says: 'I have often heard him maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue' (i. ii. 78 *sqq.*).

Contrast these extracts with what I cite from Pettie, and it will be seen that the family likeness is so strong between them that it cannot result from coincidence only:

'ANNIB. When eyther thorow the authoritie of olde age, or thorow ambition, or covetousnesse, or too good opinion in his own sufficiencie, the father is so desirous of keping his paternale jurisdiction, that though his children bee arived to mans estate, and be perfectly accomplished every way, yet he will alowe them neither more living, nor more liberty then they had when they were children.

'GUAZ. I thinke they have just cause to bee mal contents, who knowing themselves to be sufficient men, and to be so taken

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of every man, are neverthelesse used by their father like children: and therefore I cannot blame them greatly, if instead of loving him, they complaine of death for delaying the execution of that judgement, which so long before was pronounced agaynst him: . . . adding, that his living will do him no good when it falleth into his handes, for that, by course of nature, he shall be constrained to forgoe it againe . . . but I wyll say, that they ought to acknowledge their insufficiency and want of judgement, and to referre the ordering of their house and living to their chyl dren, who are of discretion to deale in suche waighty matters.' (Bk. III. 65.)¹

INTRO-
DUCTION

Love's Labour's Lost.

One of the salient features of this play is the Academy—or 'Academe,' as the author always spells it. It has been suggested that he may have got the idea from Thomas Bowes' translation of De la Primaudaye's *French Academy* (1577), or perhaps from short passages in Greene, or Dekker, or even from J. K[eper]'s *Courtiers Academie* (1586). It seems, however, that the *Civile Conversation* is a more likely source, containing as it does a wealth of information in reference to such associations, and the actual working arrangements, procedure, and ceremonies which they had adopted; ² and the presence in the play of the fantastical Spaniard Don Armado, who is here made the butt of other characters in quite the fashion in which Anniball and Guazzo deride the exaggerated language of the Spaniards, and those who modelled their speech upon it at that time in Italy, lends some confirmation to

¹ See also *ibid.* 66-8, too long to quote here.

² See Bk. I. 42-3, and Bk. II. 224-5.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO-
DUCTION

the supposition. The very solemnity with which Guazzo mentions the Academies of Italy may possibly have led Shakespeare—then very young and full of playful spirit—to poke fun at these institutions; for as Dr. Dowden says of *Love's Labour's Lost*: 'It is a satirical extravaganza embodying Shakespeare's criticism upon contemporary fashions and foibles in speech, in manners, and in literature.'¹

At Act i. Sc. ii., Armado having acknowledged that he was in love, asks Moth to comfort him, and tell him 'what great men have been in love.' Moth lets him know of Hercules and of Samson: Solomon is added some hundred lines later, by the Spaniard himself. Now Pettie's *Guazzo* has the following: 'Thou canst neither bee more learned 'then David, neither more strong then Sampson, neither 'more wise then Solomon, who notwithstanding have 'falne by meanes of women' (Bk. ii. 232). It looks at least as if Shakespeare was thinking of that passage, for two out of the three names mentioned by Pettie are adapted, and both are Biblical characters. Professor Warwick Bond, however, says that Shakespeare here was borrowing from Lyly's *Euphues*; ² although as a matter of fact the names of Lyly's 'unfortunate lovers' are all of a very different class from that to which Guazzo's belong, viz. Acontius, Tarquinius, Julius Cæsar, Hannibal, Leander, Iphis, and Pyramus. I regret to have to differ from so distinguished a scholar, but it is obvious that Professor Warwick Bond was not acquainted at the time with Pettie's *Civile Conversation*.

¹ See *Shakespeare, His Mind and Art*.

² Vol. i. 169, *op. cit.*

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Macbeth.

INTRO-
DUCTION

The interview between Macbeth and the Doctor in relation to the troubled state of the Queen runs as follows :

‘MACB. How does your patient, doctor ?

DOCT. Not so sick, my lord,

As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,

That keep her from her rest.

MACB. Cure her o f that.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased . . .

DOCT. Therein the patient

Must minister to himself.

MACB. Throw physic to the dogs ; I ’ll none of it.’ (v. iii.)

It is hardly possible to think that this extract from *Macbeth* was ever written by any one who had not studied closely the conversation between Anniball and Guazzo upon topics of a very similar character. Anniball, having spoken of ‘the infirmitie of the body,’ continues : ‘but ‘to the maladie of the mind, you ought at al times to ‘apply apt remedies, indeavouring so much as you may ‘possibly, to be meerie, and to tread under foote al irksome ‘thoughts which molest you . . . For all the Phisitions ‘not only of Fraunce . . . no not Esculapius himselfe, ‘by any medicine . . . can . . . give you the least helpe ‘in the world . . . for that the medicine is in your owne ‘handes, whereby in short time you may bee restored ‘to your health’ (Bk. i. 16, 18).

Early in *Macbeth* we have Malcolm’s description of Cawdor’s death :

‘ Nothing in his life

Became him like the leaving it,’ (i. iv. 7.)

which looks very like a Shakespearian transmutation of a quotation cited in Pettie :

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

‘ A worthy death doeth honour al our life.’ (Bk. II. 182.)

When Lady Macbeth enjoins her husband to keep his thoughts from showing in his face, her words are :

‘ bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue : look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under ’t.’ (I. v. 65.)

The simile, in varying forms, was one that Shakespeare had already used three times in other plays : so it is not improbable that the source from which all come was the *Civile Conversation* :

‘ That in the fayrest flowers and grasse,
The serpent most doeth lurke.’ (Bk. II. 137.)

A single word, provided it be of an unusual character, may at times furnish very convincing evidence that one writer has borrowed from another ; and we have unquestionably an example of the kind in the word ‘ breeched ’ as used by Pettie : ‘ you meane by your wordes to include ‘ me in the number of the melancholike, which have their ‘ wit so *breeched*, that they cannot discerne sweete from ‘ sowre ’ (Bk. I. 19).

The meaning of the original Italian is unmistakable, *offuscato il cavello* ; while the French of Gabriel Chappuys is *qui ont tellement le cerveau offusqué*.

Macbeth has the following :

‘ there, the murderers,
Steep’d in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly *breech’d* ¹ with gore.’ (II. iii. 121.)

¹ The *New English Dictionary* gives ‘ breeched ’ as meaning, in a figurative sense, ‘ covered, or clothed, with breeches.’ Cotgrave’s *French Dictionary* (1611) has ‘ *offusquer* = to offuscate, obscure, blacken, darken, dimme,’ etc. The word obviously means in English nothing more than ‘ dulled ’ or ‘ dimmed.’

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Macbeth also furnishes an instance of the use of *receipt* in the sense of 'receptacle,' or 'gathering-place,' not employed after Elizabeth's time : INTRO-
DUCTION

' That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt [Fr. *receit*] of reason
A limbeck only.' (i. vii. 66.)

And the *Civile Conversation* describes the 'Countries of Piemont' as 'having been . . . a continuall receite for souldiers of many nations' (Bk. i. 63).

Measure for Measure.

Isabella's words to Angelo,

' How would you be,
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are ? O, think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made,' (ii. ii. 75-79.)

have led to considerable conflict of opinions as to the meaning of the last line. A passage from Pettie, however, supplies, in the English of the time, a very simple explanation of the phrase. It is part of a description of the lover who, on seeing his mistress approach, rearranges his ruffs and cap, etc.: 'hee pulleth up his cloake about his shoulders, hee standeth a tiptoe, hee sheweth a joyfull and smyling countenaunce, and hee seemeth *to become a newe man . . .*' (Bk. ii. 236).

In the same Book (p. 231) we have: 'Remembring the saying, That the vaine wordes of temporall men, are

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'meere blasphemies in the mouth of spirituall men,' a
DUCTION passage which certainly seems to have served as model
for

'That in the captain's but a cholerick word
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.' (II. ii. 130.)

In Bk. II. 110 is: 'the worlde is come to this passe,
'that it counteth any thing to bee lawfull, which is
'delightful.' While Isabella in the play uses the words:

'Bidding the law make curt'sy to their will.' (II. iv. 176.)

Merchant of Venice.

There is in this play a passage of no apparent significance, and, so far as I know, never yet considered by any of our commentators as deserving of a note. For all that, it forms a highly important link in the chain of evidence which connects the names of Pettie and Shakespeare. In Act I. Sc. ii., Nerissa questions Portia: 'Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?' And Portia replies: 'Yes, yes, it was Bassanio.' Here are a few facts that lend an interest to the hitherto unnoticed Marquis. Stefano Guazzo is described on the title-page of all the Italian editions as 'Gentilhuomo di Casale di Monferrato.' It is the same in some of the French translations, except that *there* the word becomes Montferrat. In Bk. iv. 187 we have mention of 'a certain Embassador of the communaltie of Monferrato'; while the place itself is referred to by name very many times in the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Civile Conversation. Besides, Guazzo's patron, the Lady Margarita, Duchess of Mantua, was also Marchesana del Monferrato. INTRO-
DUCTION

In Act II. of the play Bassanio and his friends are preparing to leave Venice for Belmont, which was obviously in the neighbourhood of Padua. There are many references to their making the journey by water. 'Bassanio presently will go aboard,' says Antonio: Gratiano talks of being 'under sail and gone to-night' (Sc. vi.): while of Shylock it is said, 'He came too late, the ship was under sail' (Sc. viii.). Then later Portia gives directions to Balthasar to take a message to Doctor Bellario at Padua, and to bring the 'notes and garments' 'to the common ferry which trades to Venice,' where she will be before him.

Shakespeare, as is now known, had a very accurate knowledge of the waterways of North Italy,¹ but it is not a little remarkable that Pettie supplied him with some timely information concerning the very water-journey by which Balthasar was to get to Venice. Anniball says to his friend Guazzo: 'so likewise we must not sticke to 'come foorth of our doores, to doe our businesse in dealing with men, for feare of ill companie. As if you were 'bounde *from Padua to Venice*, you will not let slip oportunitie, for that you will not imbarke your selfe in a 'vessel wherein there are sometimes men, women, religious, seculer, Souldiours, Courtiers, Almans, Frenchmen, 'Spaniards, Jewes, and other of divers nations and qualities' (Bk. I. 2).

¹ See *Nineteenth Century and After*, Aug. 1908, 'Shakespeare and the Waterways of North Italy.'

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

In Act II. Sc. i., Mistress Ford, coming into Page's house, is about to tell Page's wife of the love-letter she had received from Sir John Falstaff :

' MRS. FORD. O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect,
I could come to such honour !

MRS. PAGE. Hang the trifle, woman ; take the honour.
What is it ?—dispense with trifles ;—what is it ?

MRS. FORD. If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment
or so, I could be knighted.

MRS. PAGE. What ? thou liest. Sir Alice Ford ! *These
knights will hack ; . . .*

MRS. FORD. We burn daylight : here, read, read. [*She shows
the letter.*] . . . I think the best way were to entertain him
with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him
in his own grease.'

In all the best-known editions of Shakespeare the passage italicised above has been absolutely festooned with notes. The *New English Dictionary* cannot explain the word 'hack' ; and the *Shakespeare Glossary* describes it as 'of uncertain meaning.' I suggest with some confidence that the true interpretation of the mystery can only be arrived at by reference to an extract from the *Civile Conversation* which I here set out :

' ANNIB. . . . But wherefore thinke you women are so glad to bee courted and sued unto, meaning not to yeelde, but to stand to their honesty ?

GUAZ. I thinke that as I am not content to know my self to be an honest man, but I would have the world to know it, and trie to be so : so women mooved by the same ambition, love to be courted and tried, that by their honest aunsweres, they may be knowne to the world to be honest women.

ANNIB. Those same women be like these cutters, and hackers,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

who will take the wall of men, and picke quarrels to them, to shew what valyaunte fellowes they are, but they make so many frayes, that at length they are wounded and maymed, and so are caried to the spittle house : so these poore women, trusting in their cleere conscience, come to the amourous incounter with one, and with an other : but at length being driven from their ward,¹ they ly so open that they are soone venued, and so are brought into a place lesse pitifull, and much worse then the spittle house. (Bk. III. 32.)

Even if the verb ' to hack ' (in the sense indicated ²) had not existed in Shakespeare's time, he was quite capable of inventing it, if it suited his purpose : and that purpose *may* have been to make acknowledgment to George Pettie that he was familiar with his work. It should not be forgotten that the honour of knighthood was at this period very much under a cloud ; and many of the plays then running contain uncomplimentary references to the character and huge number of King James's knights.

The word ' Cavaleiro ' (spelt in various ways) as a mode of address is fairly frequent in this play—the Host has a strong liking for it—and is also made use of in other Shakespearian dramas. It is unnecessary to attach much importance to its printed form, except perhaps in Bottom's case in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where a distinction may have been intended as a contrast between his pronunciation and that of the Duke of Athens.³ The introduction of the

¹ This phrase is used also in *Merry Wives*, II. ii. 262, ' I could drive her then from the ward of her purity.'

² Guazzo's text has ' simili a quei coltellatori, i quali vanno pigliando la strada.' Chappuys translates, ' ressemblant aux espadacins, lesquels tiennent toute une rue.'

³ See New Variorum Edition *Midsummer Night's Dream*, editor's note, p. 174.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

word is attributed by Hart ¹ to an old play dated 1587-88; but as Bk. iv. (by Pettie and Bartholomew Young) contains countless examples of its use, the honour of being first in the field must rest with the *Civile Conversation*. The phrase would seem to furnish yet another connecting link between Shakespeare and the last-named work.

At p. 233 of Bk. ii. we have : 'women, who are commonly 'said to be like death, for that they follow those who flie 'them, and flie those which seeke them'; and the same occurs, in almost the same words, in Bk. iv. 174. While in the play we find the line :

'Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues'

(ii. ii. 221.)

Midsummer Night's Dream.

Theseus in Act v., determining to see the rustic efforts of Bottom and his comrades in the play of 'Pyramus and Thisbe,' says :

'I will hear that play ;
For never anything can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.' (v. 81.)

Hippolyta enters a protest, fearing a failure ; but the Duke reassures her in these words :

'Our sport shall be to take what they mistake :
And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,

¹ See Arden edition *Merry Wives*, p. 75.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

And in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome.' (v. 90 sq.)

INTRO- DUCTION

Both thought and diction in the above are curiously paralleled in the two extracts from Pettie which follow :

'for as it is an yl thing to make a scoffe at that which is well done, so is it a cruell and odious thing to scoffe at that which is yll done by ignorance or oversight' (Bk. II. 162).

'That boldnesse is not too be found in many Italians, for I have knowen of them many excellent and worthy men, who comming before princes, have been so astonished, and so timerous, that their coolour hath chaunged, the sweat hath runne downe their face, their voice hath trembled, their body hath quivered, and their wordes have come out so foolishly, that they have playnely shewed in what troublesome taking they have been in : And though wise men like well of it, and take it for a token of a good nature, yea, and in respect thereof beare them the greater affection, yet oftentimes such perturbations hinder a man much, and are mockt at, as unmeete for men' (Bk. III. 81).

Much Ado About Nothing.

The *Civile Conversation* gives a good description of the tokens by which a man may be known to be in love :

'And so soone as hee spyeth comming a farre of, her whom hee hath placed most neere to his heart, I warrant you he setteth his ruffles, *hee turneth his Cappe and feather the right way* . . . hee sheweth a joyfull and smyling countenance . . . that hee may bee more acceptable to the sight of his mistresse,' etc. (Bk. II. 236).

And surely the creator of Benedick had this passage in mind when making him exclaim :

Is't come to this, i' faith ? Hath not the world one man
but he will *wear his cap with suspicion* ?' (I. i. 207.)

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

There is again a strong echo of Pettie in the scene where Beatrice is induced to play the eavesdropper and listen to Hero and Ursula sounding the praises of Benedick, in order to lure her into falling in love with him :

‘ My talk to thee ’ [says Hero] ‘ must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice : of this matter
Is little Cupid’s crafty arrow made,
That only *wounds by hearsay*.’ (III. i. 20.)

Beatrice, caught in the trap, when the conspirators have gone breaks into soliloquy :

‘ What fire is in mine ears ? . . .
And, Benedick, love on . . .
For *others say thou dost deserve*, and I
Believe it *better than reportingly*.’ (Ib. 107-116.)

Now Guazzo when treating of the best way to choose a wife writes :

‘ I will shew it you by the authoritie of Olympias the mother of Alexander, whose saying, worthy to be written in letters of Golde, was : that women *are to be married with the eares*, before they are with the eyes, for . . . we ought at least to deale in such sort, that out of the mouth of divers, constant *report* may come to our eares of the parentage, and of the life and behavyour of them ’ (Bk. III. 14-15).

Othello.

Iago’s description of Cassio—‘ A fellow almost damn’d in a fair wife ’—at the opening of *Othello* has perplexed a vast number of Shakespeare scholars ; but with the help of a passage in Pettie the line is relieved of all obscurity : ‘ It is yet an ordinary saying, That he that hath a white ‘ Horse, and a fayre woman, is never without trouble : ‘ wherto maye be added this saying : Haste thou taken

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

‘one fayre? to thine owne care’ (Bk. III. 10). What is more likely than that Shakespeare should put an Italian proverb into the mouth of Iago, after having found it in the *Civile Conversation*?

In the same play occur the lines :

‘ Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls :
Who steals my purse steals trash : . . .
But he that filches from me my good name,’ etc. :
(III. iii.)

which we can well believe were developed from :

‘ For as the soule is more precious then the body, so is it a greater offence to take away ones good name, which refresheth the soule, then to defraud one of food, which sustaineth the body ’ (Bk. I. 66).

Again, when Emilia has told the truth about the handkerchief—how it was she who gave it to Iago, who had begged of her to steal it—the Moor turns on her husband exclaiming :

‘ Are there no stones in heaven
But what serve for the thunder ? Precious villain ! ’
(v. ii. 233.)

The adjective was manifestly one of unusual offensiveness, and it is followed by the stage direction, ‘ He runs at Iago ’; but its full meaning has apparently escaped the commentators. Pettie, however, supplies a telling elucidation in describing an old beggar, ‘ whose nose,’ he says, ‘ by some infirmitie was become mervellous great, deformed, ful of pimples, *precious*, and monstrous ’ (Bk. I. 97). The true meaning in that passage is rendered certain by the Italian and Chappuys’ French, being *pieno di marcia*, and

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- *moisy*, respectively; and so Othello's adjective is what
DUCTION would now be called 'scabby.'¹

Romeo and Juliet.

In discussing the bringing up of daughters a question is raised as to whether a very strict control by the father is more efficacious than gentler methods. William Guazzo, who is against extreme measures, expresses himself as follows :

' I see not how those extremities can be commendable : for not to suffer a mayde to go abrode but once or twise in the yeare, and to keepe her inclosed like a holy relique, is the way to make her become foolish, fearefull, and oute of countenance in company, and more easie to bee caughte in a net : for being not accustomed to see the sunne, so soone as she sets her foote forth of the house, her eyes dazell with the least beame therof, and down *she falleth backward* ' (Bk. III. 75).

The last portion of this prediction is somewhat coarsely worded ; but, possibly for this very reason, Shakespeare thought fit to pass it on to a character like Juliet's nurse. This garrulous and not too squeamish old lady describes the fall which Juliet had when she was a child, and then continues :

' And then my husband—God be with his soul,
A' was a merry man—took up the child :
" Yea," quoth he, " dost thou fall upon thy face ?
Thou wilt *fall backward* when thou hast more wit." '

(I. iii. 39 *sqq.*)

' Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo ; but else, not for the world.' (II. ii. 95.)

¹ The *New English Dictionary* quotes only the example from Pettie in this sense.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

So speaks Juliet from the balcony. The thought here is one dwelt on at some length by Lord William at the Banquet in Bk. iv., where amongst other things he says :

INTRO-
DUCTION

‘ I doe not know anie wise Gentlewoman in deede . . . who would not accompt it a great shame, to like and favour her lover, unlesse she were (not once or twice) but a thousand times carnestlie entreated, and sued to before. . . . And if he doe not . . . then with a disdainfull minde she mockes and floutes him. . . . In brief, women do alwise esteeme more of those lovers, who pray to them, then of those who do vainly gape, that they should cast themselves down from the windowes, into their armes ’ (pp. 195-6).

The force of this parallel lies largely in Pettie’s final words, ‘ down from the windowes.’ The stage direction at the opening of the Shakespeare scene is : *Juliet appears above at a window.*

Richard III.

At p. 131 of Bk. II. we find ‘ but also by the windowes of his eyes . . . ’; and in *Richard III.* v. iii. 117 we have ‘ the windows of my eyes.’ The phrase also occurs elsewhere in Shakespeare.

Taming of the Shrew.

There are a few striking traces of Pettie in this play. Tranio, in the character of a suitor, says to Petruchio :

‘ If it be so, sir, that you . . .

Achieve the elder, set the younger free

For our access, whose hap shall be to have her

Will not so graceless be to be ingrate ’ : (I. ii. 268-73.)

a speech that may well have been suggested by ‘ no child ‘ should be so graceless and grateless . . . to forget those ‘ three benefits received ’ (Bk. III. 72).

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO-
DUCTION

Again :

'BAPTISTA. If either of you both love Katharina . . .

Leave shall you have to *court* her at your pleasure.

GREMIO. To *cart* her rather : she 's too rough for me ':

(I. i. 52.)

with which compare 'coveting to bee *courtlike*, they become plaine *cartlike*' (Bk. II. 165); and later, 'they take upon 'them the name of *Courtiers*, yet in their behaviour 'they shewe themselves little better than *Carters*' (*ib.* 176).

It is, besides, a somewhat curious coincidence that when Shakespeare gave the name of 'Sugarsop' to one of the servants in the play (IV. i. 92) he should have adopted one of the two 'receites' which Anniball gives for enabling courtiers to maintain themselves in their prince's favour : 'These are abstinence, or else suger soppes'—the meaning of which he proceeds to expound in verse :

'Before their Prince let Courtiers silent be,

Or let their words be saust [sauce] with pleasaunt glee.'

(Bk. III. 112.)

In Bk. III. 29 we have, 'the wisdom, valour, and authoritie of the husband, serveth as a buckler to defende the 'honour of the wife'; and in a like spirit Petruchio declares to Katherine :

'Fear not, sweet wench; they shall not touch thee, Kate :

I 'll buckler thee against a million.'

(III. ii. 241.)

Then again, Lucentio welcoming his guests says :

'My banquet is to close our stomachs up,

After our great good cheer':

(V. ii. 9.)

the origin of which may well have been : 'Now after the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO-
DUCTION

‘ delicate meates you have made mee taste . . . I hope it
‘ will please you to morrowe to close up my stomacke with
‘ that Collation or Banquet whiche you have alreadye
‘ promised mee.’ (Bk. III. 112).

The Tempest.

There is a passage of much difficulty here. Ferdinand enters ‘ bearing a log,’ and soliloquises :

‘ There be some sports are painful, and their labour
Delight in them sets off : . . .

This my mean task

Would be as heavy to me, as odious ; but
The mistress which I serve quickens what ’s dead,
And makes my labours pleasures : . . .

I forget :

But these sweet thoughts do even refresh my labours,
Most busy least, when I do it.’ (III. i. 1-17.)

Multitudinous corrections have been made in the First Folio reading of the last line, which is as here printed, save that *least* takes the place of its very common variant *lest*. A simple explanation of the sentence containing this puzzling phrase is found by taking *most busy* as = ‘busiest’—no very violent assumption—and then the whole sentence comes to this: ‘I forget (my toils): But these sweet thoughts actually give new freshness to my efforts, (which are) less than ever busiest when I am engaged on them.’

The whole of the above extract comes so close, both in idea and expression, to what we read in the *Civile Conversation*, that one may fairly suggest there has been some borrowing here on Shakespeare’s part :

‘ Though this honest leasure [which is due to one after work]
serve to take away the care of the minde . . . a man must

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

whet his wits in suche sorte, that in steede of taking his ease, hee sometime taketh more paine then when hee is waightly affaired. . . . You make me heere remember our peasants of the countrie, who having laboured sore al the weeke, spende the sunday in daunsing out of al crie : in so much that . . . they . . . take more payne that day only, then they doe in all the worke dayes besides. ANNIB. . . . for albeit they exercise the body lesse in working then in daunsing, yet they doe the one with paine and grieve, and the other with so great pleasure, that it maketh them . . . goe to their worke a great deale more lustily' (Bk. II. 246).

Timon of Athens.

'VARRO'S SERVANT. How dost, fool ?

APEMANTUS. Dost dialogue with thy shadow ?

VAR. SERV. I speak not to thee.

APEM. No ; 'tis to thyself.' (II. ii. 51 sq.)

With which compare Anniball's remarks, when discussing the advantages of conversation over the evils of solitariness : 'Which, one Crates rightly signified, who 'seeing a young man walke in a secrete place, asked him 'what hee did there so alone : the young man answered, 'that he talked with him selfe : I pray you (saieth hee) 'take heede you talke not with some naughtie fellow' (Bk. I. 46).

Again, in the same scene (line 228) Timon says :

'And nature, as it grows again toward earth,
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull and heavy.'

While Anniball, advising old men, says they should not behave themselves youthfully in their age, ' . . . but 'rather to give themselves to consider that age naturally 'maketh them crooked and stooping towards the grounde,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO- DUCTION

‘ to the ende they may thinke to returne from whence they
‘ came ’ (Bk. II. 174).

Another passage from Pettie reads : ‘ there is bargayn-
‘ ing for all thinges, whiche are fit to heale *the diseases of*
‘ *povertie*, and to get the health of riches ’ (Bk. II. 118).
If Shakespeare caught this idea from the *Civile Conversa-*
tion, he has transmuted it in his noblest way :

‘ and his poor self,
A dedicated beggar to the air,
With his disease of all-shunn’d poverty,
Walks, like contempt, alone.’ (IV. II. 12-15.)

Titus Andronicus.

‘ And faster bound to Aaron’s charming eyes
Than is Prometheus tied to Caucasus.’ (II. I. 16.)

But, seven years at least before these lines were written,
Pettie’s translation contained the following : ‘ And if we
‘ consider diligently the fable of Prometheus, Jupiter’s
‘ Ambassador upon the Mount Caucasus, and his heart
‘ torne by the Egle . . . ’ (Bk. I. 49).

It is possible, of course, that Shakespeare may have
carried with him from school many such scraps of myth-
ology ; but it may also be that his reading of the *Civile*
Conversation stirred his memory to a more distinct recollec-
tion of what he had once known.

Twelfth Night.

It is William Guazzo who, when discussing the artful
way ‘ to trimme up our speech, and to goe an ace beyonde
the common sort,’ says : ‘ We must not then blame the
‘ diligent industry of some, who like unto Bees, gather
‘ hony of divers flowers : and not suffering one word,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- 'sentence, or mery jest, spoken by others, to fall to the
DUCTION 'ground, write them in their tables, to the intent to use
'them themselves afterwarde eyther in speaking or
'writing' (Bk. II. 137). And this is the very course taken
by Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* (III. i. 102)
when, lost in admiration of the courtly language which
Viola addresses to the Lady Olivia, he exclaims:
'"Odours," "pregnant," and "vouchsafed": I'll get
'em all three all ready,' and proceeds to jot them down
in his table-book. Where else but in Pettie's volume did
Shakespeare find so excellent a model for his Illyrian
prince of simpletons?

Shakespeare shows a strong partiality for the use of
the word 'map' in figurative description of a simple kind:
'Thou map of honour'; 'Thou map of woe'; 'I see, as
in a map, the end of all,' are instances. On one occasion,
however, he rises to greater heights, when in *Twelfth
Night* he makes Maria say: 'he does smile his face into
'more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation
'of the Indies' (III. ii. 80-2). The source from whence
the idea was derived is, I think, unmistakably a passage
in the *Civile Conversation*, where one of the speakers, in
describing the extraordinary head adornments of some
fashionably dressed women whom he had lately seen, ends
by saying: 'I rehearse not unto you a thousand other trifles,
'which dimmed and dazeled mine eyes, in such sort as
'certaine Mappes doe, wherein are drawne foorth in small
'figures, the squadrons of horse menne, the troupes of
'foote menne, and the number of the pieces of artillery'
(Bk. III. 34).

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Troilus and Cressida.

INTRO- DUCTION

A passage in the play refers to Milo, the strong man. It is the only time he is mentioned in Shakespeare. Ulysses is the speaker, and in praise of Ajax says :

‘ and for thy vigour,
Bull-bearing Milo his addition yield
To sinewy Ajax.’ (II. iii. 258.)

Craig, usually a very careful critic, says : ‘ Shakespeare ‘read of Milo in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (see Golding, ‘ Bk. xv. 250-55).’ But these lines make no mention of Milo’s strength, and the bull is not alluded to. Pettie, however, has the following : ‘ That he [the father] suffer ‘ them [the children] not to be idle, but to inure them to ‘ labour, as Milo was able to carry a bull, bicause he used ‘ to carry hym a calfe ’ (Bk. III. 70). The very phrase ‘ bull-bearing ’ seems to demonstrate the fact that the dramatist had Guazzo’s version of the tale in his mind.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

In Act II. Sc. i. 145, Speed says, ironically :

‘ O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible,
As a nose on a man’s face ’;

and in quite the same way Pettie remarks : ‘ the simple ‘ soules not perceiving that this their transformation or ‘ rather deformation is no more seene then a nose in a ‘ mans face ’ (Bk. II. 173).

Then later :

‘ SPEED. *Item*, She is slow in words.

LAUNCE. O villain, that set this down among her vices ! To be slow in words is a woman’s only virtue : I pray thee, out with ’t, and place it for her chief virtue.’ (III. i. 338.)

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- Mr. J. Churton Collins thought the idea was borrowed from
DUCTION Sophocles,¹ but I fancy Shakespeare found it a good deal nearer home, for the *Civile Conversation* has : ‘ it is commonly sayde, That where is least heart, is moste tongue. And therefore silence in a woman is greatly commended : for it setteth her foorth muche, and maketh her thought to be verie wise ’ (Bk. II. 240). And again, ‘ the answere of wise women is scilence ’ (Bk. III. 39).

At Act v. Sc. iv. 164, Valentine to Duke :

‘ What think you of this page, my lord ? ’

and the Duke replies :

‘ I think the boy hath grace in him : he blushes ’ :

while Pettie, treating of what is becoming in a young man, writes : ‘ hee ought in companie to bee indued with suche a modest shamefastnesse, that his cheekes may nowe and then bee dyed with Vermilion, whiche will become him, and is a token of a good nature, and a signe that he wil come to goodnesse ’ (Bk. II. 170).

The Winter's Tale.

In a Book of Courtesy such as the *Civile Conversation* there is naturally a good deal said on the subject of gentry, and the differing classes into which ‘ gentlemen ’ are properly divided. The two speakers in the dialogue agree in allowing ‘ the absolute gentleman ’ the topmost place of honour, and he is described as one who, being a gentleman by birth, has upheld and advanced his title by the acquisition of such knowledge as befits his place. A

¹ See *Fortnightly Review*, July 1903.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

leading statement of Anniball's on the matter is: 'For INTRO-
DUCTION
'that this saying is most true, that gentry is the daughter
'of knowledge: and that knowledge doeth gentellise him
'that possesseth it. . . . For the more good partes bee
'in a man, the more Gentlemanlike hee is sayde to bee'
(Bk. II. 184). One cannot help assuming that these words
were strong in Shakespeare's memory when in *The Winter's
Tale* he makes Polixenes say:

' Camillo,—
As you are certainly a gentleman; *thereto*
Clerk-like experienc'd, which no less adorns
Our gentry than our parents' noble names,
In whose success we are gentle,—I beseech you,
If you know aught which does behove my knowledge
Thereof to be inform'd, imprison 't not
In ignorant concealment.' (I. ii. 390 *sqq.*)

The same sentiment runs strongly through Pettie's Preface
to the Readers, p. 9.

Again, when Pettie touches on the 'halfe Gentlemen,'
a class described as 'Gentlemen only by birth, comming
'of some auncient house, but having in themselves neither
'good conditions nor good behaviour, nor so much as
'any shew of gentry,' he goes on: 'these bee those which
'straine themselves to sweare at every worde by the fayth
'of a Gentleman, when there is no oth required of them
' . . . by meanes whereof they make themselves suspected
' . . . and they seeme to bee afeard least they should
'not be taken for Gentlemen, as those who are knowen
'in lookes, in wordes, and in deedes to bee very clownes'
(Bk. II. 176). May not these sentiments be the source
from which Shakespeare derived the subject of the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- conversation between the old Shepherd and the Clown,
DUCTION his son, in the same play, when debating on the question
of giving Autolycus a good character ?

‘ CLOWN. Thou wilt amend thy life ?

AUT. Ay, an it like your good worship.

CLO. Give me thy hand : I will swear to the prince, thou art
as honest a true fellow as any is in Bohemia.

SHEP. You may say it, but not swear it.

CLO. Not swear it, now I am a gentleman ? Let boors and
franklins say it, I ’ll swear it.’ (v. ii. 182 *sqq.*)

Then, when Paulina addresses the repentant Leontes
towards the close of the play, she says :

‘ True, too true, my lord :

If one by one you wedded all the world,

Or from the all that are took something good,

To make a perfect woman, she you kill’d

Would be unparallel’d’ : (v. i. 12 *sqq.*)

words which seem to be an echo of what Pettie had already
put into the mouth of one of his dialogists : ‘ I remember I
‘ have read of a good wise Paynter, who having to draw the
‘ singuler bewties of Hellene, assembled together a company
‘ of the fairest women he coulde get, and taking of every
‘ one of them that parte which was most excellent in them,
‘ he reduced al those bewties into the shape of Hellen . . . ’
(Bk. III. 74).

Nor was Orlando above borrowing from the same source
when penning verses in praise of Rosalind :

‘ Therefore Heaven Nature charg’d

That one body should be fill’d

With all graces wide-enlarg’d :

Nature presently distill’d

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Helen's cheek, but not her heart,
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty.'

INTRO-
DUCTION

(*As You Like It*, III. ii. 150 sqq.)

While in *Sonnets*, LIII., we again find an amplification of the same idea, though worked into a fairer poetical form ; and again in *The Tempest* :

' O you,
So perfect, and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best.' (III. i. 46.)

The Sonnets.

The leading idea which dominates the first seventeen is an exhortation to the young man to whom these sonnets are addressed that he should marry, and so prolong the beauty and nobility of his race and name. The idea may have been altogether the poet's own ; or, as has been suggested, he may have been requested to use his pen in furthering a motion in which others were interested. Then again, he may possibly have been moved to make his appeal to the Benedick of the moment by something he had read which opened a possibility of poetic treatment such as he may have wished for at the time. If this were so, there is a passage in the *Civile Conversation* that may have caught his eye :

' you know that a wise and stayde man frameth himselfe cherefully to any kinde of life, and specially forgetteth not this sentence, That it is an execrable thing wilfully to deprive ones self of immortalitie, which he doth who seeketh not to have wife and children ' (Bk. III. 4).

It is but right to say in conclusion that many of the foregoing examples of similarity of thought, or locution,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- DUCTION

may have reached Shakespeare from sources outside the *Civile Conversation*; or indeed may have originated in his own mind without any conscious effort of recollection either of Pettie or of any other writer. There is, however, another point of view from which the *Civile Conversation* may be regarded as having been of considerable service to the dramatist in a special way. Shakespeare can never have been in Italy: and, so far as books are concerned, there was no work in his day that could have given him an insight into the social manners of the Italian people to be for a moment compared with Pettie's work. From high-born English travellers he could, no doubt, have gathered much, but not very much about the life of that everyday type of citizen of which his own *dramatis personae* were so largely composed. For this reason we may fairly assume that the *Civile Conversation* came as a refreshing supplement into Shakespeare's hands, telling so much more of the people than of the patrician, filling the unlit spaces of his background with real, breathing natives of a foreign soil, and all pictured for him by an enthusiastic and observant student of humanity, and rendered, for his ready comprehension, into consummate English by a master of that tongue. The revelation it opened to him must have been a rare surprise—giving him to know, and on authority that none might question, that there was so small a difference in domestic life and manners between England as he knew it and the Italy of which he was desirous of knowing more. Here, I feel sure, is to be found Shakespeare's complete justification (if such be needed) for surrounding Aufidius the Volscian in early

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

INTRO-
DUCTION

Roman times with typically British serving-men; for doing the same, in a more modern Italy, with Petruchio at his country house near Padua, and for giving such servants as Speed and Launce to the two Gentlemen of Verona; for planting Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek in a region so little suggestive of their essentially English ways as Illyria; for appointing to the city of Messina one Dogberry as constable, and Verges as his assistant 'headborough'; and, generally, for peopling his scenes abroad with characters who are from head to heel the true-bred and unmistakable products of his own country in his own day.¹ It can hardly be denied that there is a striking general similarity between the language used by Pettie and the prose of Shakespeare; and even the punctuation of the *Civile Conversation* has a good many of the characteristics to be found in the text of the First Folio, which has been so ruthlessly altered by modern editors. Shakespeare's amazing vocabulary will of course always stand alone; and no one would venture to suggest that Pettie had at his command a range of any such dimensions in the matter of words. He never aimed in the shaping of his sentences at such flights as the dramatist so easily accomplished—relying largely as he did on the power which, as he tells us in his Preface, he believed himself capable of showing in the use of the everyday verbiage of his own time. What he says to his Readers is worth reproducing:

'But how hardly soever you deale with your tongue, how barbarous soever you count it, how little soever you esteeme

¹ See *Nineteenth Century and After*, 'An Italian Book of Etiquette in Shakespeare's Day,' June 1913.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

INTRO- it, I durst my selfe undertake (if I were furnished with Learnyng
DUCTION otherwyse) to wryte in it as copiouslye for varietie, as compendiously for brevitie, as choycely for woordes, as pithily for sentences, as pleasauntly for figures, and every way as eloquently, as any writer should do in any vulgar tongue whatsoever' (Preface, p. 12).

No small boast this, from the pen of an author who had written but one volume of short romances. And yet it is not altogether an empty boast; for he follows it up, full of confidence, with the printed pages of the book by which he was apparently prepared to stand or fall. And he had the satisfaction of seeing that volume in a second edition before five years had gone by. Montaigne gives a description of the sort of language he liked most, and it is not very far off from that which Pettie wrote:

'It is a naturall, simple, and unaffected speech that I love, so written as it is spoken, and such upon the paper, as it is in the mouth, a pithie, sinnowie, full, strong, compendious and materiall speech, not so delicate and affected as vehement and piercing. Rather difficult then tedious, void of affection, free, loose and bold, that every member of it seeme to make a bodie; not Pedanticall, nor Frier-like, nor Lawyer-like, but rather downe right, Souldier-like.'¹

EDWARD SULLIVAN.

¹ *Essayes*, Florio's trans., Bk. I. 183, Tudor Translations.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

WRITTEN FIRST IN ITALIAN, AND NOWE TRANSLATED OUT OF FRENCH BY GEORGE PETTIE, DEVIDED INTO FOURE BOOKES. IN THE FIRST IS CONTEINED IN GENERALL, THE FRUITES THAT MAY BEE REAPED BY CONVERSATION, AND TEACHING HOWE TO KNOWE GOOD COMPANIE FROM YLL. IN THE SECOND, THE MANNER OF CONVERSATION, MEETE FOR ALL PERSONS, WHICH SHALL COME IN ANY COMPANIE, OUT OF THEIR OWNE HOUSES, AND THEN OF THE PERTICULAR POINTS WHICH OUGHT TO BEE OBSERVED IN COMPANIE BETWEENE YOUNG MEN AND OLDE, GENTLEMEN AND YEOMEN, PRINCES AND PRIVATE PERSONS, LEARNED AND UNLEARNED, CITIZENS AND STRANGERS, RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR, MEN AND WOMEN. IN THE THIRD IS PERTICULARLY SET FOORTH THE ORDERS TO BEE OBSERVED IN CONVERSATION WITHIN DOORES, BETWEENE THE HUSBAND AND THE WIFE, THE FATHER AND THE SONNE, BROTHER AND BROTHER, THE MAISTER AND THE SERVANT. 1581. IN THE FOURTH, THE REPORT OF A BANQUET, TRANSLATED OUT OF ITALIAN INTO ENGLISH BY BARTH. YOUNG, OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, GENT. 1586

TO THE HONORABLE, AND HIS VERY GOOD LADIE,

THE LADY NORRICE,

George Pettie wisheth contentation
in all thinges



GOOD Madame, the force of vertue is such, that it purchaseth to those which are indued with it, the good will of those which are strangers unto them : much more must it make mee duetifully affectioned to your Ladiship, who am neither stranger to you, nor unacquainted with your noble and vertuous disposition : in signe of which my dutie and affection, I have presumed to present unto you the first sight of this my translation, humbly dedicating it to your honourable protection, knowing that none will more willingly undertake the defence of learning, then those who are indued with singuler wit and learning, and thinking none more worthy to receive the first fruites of learning, then those who beare especiall favour to learning. I will not

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
EPISTLE
DEDICA-
TORIE

heere enter into the wide field of your vertues, for that I knowe you take more pleasure in doing wel, then in hearing well, and for that the right Corral needeth no coulouring, neither the fine Marble painting, neither can my pen possibly procure more honour to your name, then it hath alredie gotten, partly by your owne doinges, partly by the renowned deedes of the noble Gentlemen your sonnes, of whom, some are furnished with suche wisdomes, with such discretion, and with such sufficiencie every way, that our Prince and Countrie cannot spare their good service : some are indued with suche valour, that our Countrie is too little to containe the greatnesse of their mindes, some with such manly prowesse, even in their childishe yeeres, that it stoode our Countrie of late in no small steede, in repressing and subduing our rebellious enimies. And though some of them like Alexander the great, seeke newe Countries, and newe worldes to shewe their valiancie in, yet they remaine most redy to doe our countrie service, whensoever it shall please our Prince to commaunde their returne. And would to God it might please her Majestie with speed to commaund it : for suche rare jewels are well worth the wearing, such worthy Captaines are necessary to be had in these daungerous times : especially being

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
EPISTLE
DEDICA-
TORIE

such whose valiancie is sufficiently knowne to all men, and whose fidelitie may be sufficiently warranted to her Highnesse, by the good and trustie service of their noble father my Lorde Norrice, both within this Realme, and out of the Realme, and of their worthie grandfather, my Lorde Williams, both before her Majestie came to the Crowne, and after : and by the rare vertue which they have shewed, and the faithfull service they have doone where they are : Whose credite is so great, whose name so renowned, that it shall never die, while the low Countries, while Macklin, while Stenewike, no not while the worlde standes. And if any name within these late yeeres, have by their valiaunt deedes wonne honour to England (without derogation be it spoken) it is the name of the Norrices. And if any parents in Englande may count themselves happie in their children, it is my Lorde Norrice, it is your Ladiship. You may compare with Olimpias for her Alexander, with Hecuba for her Hector, with Thetis for her Achilles. And if you bee askt where your jewels are, you may with Cornelia point to your children, you may point to that rare jewell which you have continually about you, who both in vertue and bewtie excelleth the richest Diamond, and the most precious Pearle that is. But I am entring

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
EPISTLE
DEDICA-
TORIE

into a matter without ende, therefore I will stay at the beginning: humbly requesting you to accept in good part this small prooffe of my good will, and to assure your selfe of my redinesse to doe you service in greater matters when it shall please you to imploy mee. From my lodging this sixth of February, 1581.

Your Ladiships redily to commaund,

George Pettie.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE PREFACE TO THE READERS



HAVING (gentle Readers) by reason of a trifling woorke of mine (which, by reason of the lightnesse of it, or at least of the keeper of it, flewe abroad before I knewe of it) already wonne such fame, as he which fyred the Temple of Dianæ, I thought it stooode mee uppon, to purchase to my selfe some better fame by some better woorke, and to countervayle my former Vanitie, with some formal gravitie. And though I knowe all fame to be daungerous, for that if it be good, envie foloweth it, and if it be yll, shame accompanyeth it : yet, seeing report once spread, cannot be revoked, and havynge already past the Pikes in a daungerous conflict without wounde of honour (such was your courtesie) I doubt not now but to escape a fewe stragling shot in a lyght skirmishe, without so much as bearyng the discharge of their Peeces : for the men which wyll assayle me, are in deede rather to be counted friendly foes, then deadly enimies, as those who wyll neyther mislyke with me, nor with the matter which I shall present unto them, but tendryng, as it were, my credite, thynke it convenient that such as I am (whose profession should chiefly be armes) should eyther spende the tyme in wryting of Bookes, or publyshe them beyng written. Those which mislyke studie or learnynge in Gentlemen, are some freshe water Souldiers, who thynke that in warre it is the body which only must beare the brunt of all, not knowyng that the body is ruled by the minde, and that in all doubtfull and daungerous matters, it is the minde only which is the man : but having shewed els where how necessarie learning is for Souldiers, I ad only, that if we in England shall frame our selves only for warre, yf we be not very well Oyled, we shall hardly keepe our selves from rustynge, with such long

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

TO THE
READER

continuance of peace, it hath pleased God to blesse us. Those which myslike that a Gentleman should publish the fruites of his learning, are some curious Gentlemen, who thynke it most commendable in a Gentleman, to cloake his arte and skill in every thyng, and to seeme to doo all thynges of his owne mother witte as it were : not considering how we deserve no prayse for that, which God or Nature hath bestowed upon us, but only for that, which we purchase by our owne industry : and if you shall chaunce to enter into reasonyng with them, they wyll at the seconde woorde make protestation that they are no Schollers : whereas notwithstanding they have spent all theyr tyme in studie. Why Gentlemen is it a shame to shewe to be that, which it is a shame not to be ? In divers thynges, nothing so good as Learning. You are desirous to seeme to be that, which you are not, and in Learning, the best thyng of all others, are you afearde to shewe to be that, which you are ? Alas you wyll be but ungentle Gentlemen, yf you be no Schollers : you wyll doo your Prince but simple service, you wyll stande your Countrey but in slender steade, you wyll bryng your selves but to small preferment, yf you be no Schollers. Can you counsayle your Prince wysely, foresee daungers providently, governe matters of state discretely, without Learning ? no, experience must then be your guide, which wyll be but a blynde one : it must be your Scholemaister, but you shall finde it a dangerous one. To come lower, can you discourse with Strangers, inquire the state of forraine Countries, geve entertainment to Ambassadors, being no Schollers ? no surely, unlesse it be with dum shewes and signes : lyke as of late a pleasaunt Gentleman (who could have spoken sufficiently, yf he had been put to it) being amongst others commaunded to ryde to meete an Ambassadeure that was commyng to the Court, at his returne a Noble man asked him merily, what he sayd to the Ambassadeure when he met hym : nothing (sayd he) but kist my Horses mayne, and came my way. To come lowest of all, Can you so much as tell your Mistresse a fine tale, or delight her with pleasant device, beyng unlearned ? no it must needes eyther be altogether unsaverie, or els seasoned with the salte of others : and

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

TO THE
READER

whether thynke you it more shame that you should shew to have of your owne, or that she should knowe you filche from others? You knowe Cæsar was a brave Gentleman, but yet he was a Scholler, but yet he wrote Bookes, but yet he came in print. Marcus Aurelius was an Emperour, but he was learned, and set foorth learned woorkes. Therefore (Gentlemen) never deny your selves to be Schollers, never be ashamed to shewe your learnyng, confesse it, professe it, imbrace it, honor it: for it is it which honoureth you, it is only it which maketh you men, it is onely it whiche maketh you Gentlemen: And marke this when you wyll, yf there be any in any place, which seeketh to come up, or benefite hym selfe by flatterie, by briberie, by slaverie, by villanie, I dare warrant you he is altogether unlearned: for havyng no good partes, no good giftes in hym which may preferre hym, he flyeth to those sinister shyftes as his surest staves: whereby you see that it is Learning which accomplisheth a Gentleman, and the want of it which blemisheth hym: and that neither comlinessse of personage, neither gaynesse of garments, neither any exteriour Ornamentes are to be compared to the lineamentes of Learning, without which, though a man shake the feather after the best fashion, and take upon hym never so bygly, he shall never be accounted of amongst the wyse, nor never be filed on the roale of ryght and sufficient Gentlemen. And this I hope wyll satisfie those which mislyke that Gentlemen should publishe the fruites of their studie, especially seeing thereby Learning is advaunced, and a great number pleased and profited: and seeing the only way to win immortalitie, is either to doo thinges woorth the writing, or to write thynges woorthy the readyng? And yf they objecte that that seeking of immortalitie, is a signe of vayne glory: to answeere them playnely and humanely, I am flat of this minde, that they which passe not of prayse, wyll never doo any thyng woorthy prayse. There are some others yet who wyll set lyght by my labours, because I write in Englysh: and those are some nice Travaylours, who retorne home with such queesie stomackes, that nothyng wyll downe with them but French, Italian, or Spanishe, and though a woorke be but meanelly written in one

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

TO THE
READER

of those tongues, and finely translated into our Language, yet they wyl not sticke farre to preferre the Originall before the Translation: the cause is partly, for that they cannot so soone espie faultes in a forraigne Tongue as in their owne, which maketh them thynke that to be curraunt, which is but course, and partly for that strange thynges doo more dellyght them, then that which they are dayly used to: but they consider not the profite which commeth by readyng thynges in their owne Tongue, whereby they shall be able to conceive the matter much sooner, and beare it away farre better, then yf they reade it in a strange Tongue, whereby also they shall be inabled to speake, to discourse, to write, to indite, properly, fitly, finely, and wysely, but the woorst is, they thinke that impossible to be doone in our Tongue: for they count it barren, they count it barbarous, they count it unworthy to be accounted of: and, which is woorse, as I myselfe have heard some of them, they report abroad, that our Countrey is barbarous, our maners rude, and our people uncivile: and when I have stooode with them in the comparison betweene other Countreys and ours, and poynted with my finger to many grosse abuses, used in the places where we have ben, when by no reason they have ben able to defende them, they have shronke in their necke, and tolde me that it was the fashyon of the Countrey: not considering that the maners and fashions of eche Countrey, are the only thyng that make it counted barbarous or civile, good or bad. But for our Countrey, I am perswaded that those which know it, and love it, wyl report it for the civilest Countrey in the worlde: and if it be thought to be otherwyse by strangers, the disorders of those travaylers abroad are the chiefe cause of it. And to speake but of the lyghtest, their envying one another, their depraving one another, their flowing one another, their falling out one with another, their fighting one with another in the open streete (as with blushing I have often behelde in Paris) their contemning of their Countrey fashions, their apish imitation of every outlandish Asse in their gestures, behaviour, and apparell, are the only causes that make Strangers count our Countrey and our people barbarous: for at home it is well knowne that we live in lawes

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

TO THE
READER

as orderly, in maners as decently, in apparrell as comly, in diet as delicately, in lodging as curiously, in buildinges as sumptuously, in all thinges as abundantly, and every way as civilly, as any Nation under Heaven. For the barbarousnesse of our tongue, I must lykewyse say that it is much the worse for them, and some such curious fellowes as they are : who if one chaunce to deriue any woord from the Latine, which is insolent to their eares (as perchaunce they wyll take that phrase to be) they foorthwith make a jest at it, and terme it an Inkehorne terme. And though for my part I use those woords as litle as any, yet I know no reason why I should not use them, and I finde it a fault in my selfe that I do not use them : for it is in deed the ready way to inrich our tongue, and make it copious, and it is the way which all tongues have taken to inrich them selves : For take the Latine woords from the Spanish tongue, and it shall be as barren as most part of their Countrey : take them from the Italian, and you take away in a manner the whole tongue : take them from the Frenche, and you marre the grace of it : yea take from the Latine it selfe the woords derived from the Greeke, and it shall not be so flowing and flourishing as it is. Wherefore I marveile how our English tongue hath crackt it credite, that it may not borrow of the Latine as well as other tongues : and if it have broken, it is but of late, for it is not unknowen to all men how many woordes we have fetcht from thence within these fewe yeeres, which if they should be all counted inkepot termes, I know not how we should speake any thing without blacking our mouthes with inke : for what woord can be more plaine then this word plaine, and yet what can come more neere to the Latine ? What more manifest, then manifest ? and yet in a maner Latine : What more commune then rare, or lesse rare then commune, and yet both of them comming of the Latine ? But you wyll say, long use hath made these woords curraunt : and why may not use doo as much for these woords which we shall now deriue ? Why should not we doo as much for the posteritie, as we have received of the antiquitie ? and yet if a thing be of it selfe ill, I see not how the oldnesse of it can make it good, and if it be of it selfe good,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

TO THE
READER

I see not how the newnesse of it can make it naught : Whereupon I infer, that those woords which your selves confesse by use to be made good, are good the first time they are uttered, and therefore not to be jested at, nor to be misliked. But how hardly soever you deale with your tongue, how barbarous soever you count it, how little soever you esteeme it, I durst my selfe undertake (if I were furnished with Learnyng otherwyse) to wryte in it as copiously for varietie, as compendiously for brevitie, as choycely for woordes, as pithily for sentences, as pleasauntly for figures, and every way as eloquently, as any writer should do in any vulgar tongue whatsoever. Thus having (as I hope) satisfied my curious enimies, I am to crave the good wyll of my courteous friendes, desiring you (gentle Reader) to accepte in good part these my labours, which yf they shall lyke you, I shall counte my gayne great, yf not, yet must I needes count my losse but light, in that the doing of it kept me from idlenesse, a thing so daungerous to young Gentlemen, that I wish you al, above al thinges to avoyde it : And so fare you well, from my Lodgeing neere Paules.

*Yours to imploy
George Pettie.*

Gentle Readers, I have supplied divers thinges out of the Italian original, whiche were left out by the French translator, with what judgment, I referre to your judgement.

I have included the places within two starres, as you may see throughout the Booke. I have not published the fourth Booke, for that it contayneth muche triflyng matter in it. Farewell.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST BOOKE OF CIVILE CONVERSATION

by Maister Steven Guazzo,

Conteining in generall, the fruites that may be
reaped by conversation, and teaching how
to know good companie from yll

PROEME



WENT the last yeere to Saluce to doe my
duetie to the most famous and excellent
Lorde Lewes Gonzaga Duke of Nevers,
my olde maister and friende, being
very glad that he was come into Italy,
Lieutenant general of the most Christian
king Charles the ix. A degree which no
doubt was due unto him : for were it so,
that he had not heretofore wonne it by meanes of his owne
valour and service doone to the king for the space of xxii.
yeeres, and namely, the day wherein fighting valiantly,
being but xix. yeeres old, he was taken prisoner at the
battell of S. Quintance, yet it might suffice to make him
worthie of a charge so great as that, the blood which he hath
shed, not eight monethes since at his returne into Fraunce
amongst the enimies of the Catholike faith, and the
woundes which yet at this day put us in some doubt of his
life and recoverie. Now to returne to my purpose, I found
there the gentleman my brother William, who seemed to
me to be altogether changed (and yet I had seene him not

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST past two yeeres before in Fraunce) he was become so weake,
BOOKE leane, and falne away, by the harde handling of a very long
quartane Ague, and of other great distemperatures of his
body: which as he bewailed and bewraied unto mee, I
could not for my life (seeing him in suche piteous case,
and hearing him drawe out his wordes so softly and so
weakely) keepe the teares out of my eies. For I not only
love him as a younger brother, but honor him as if hee
were the eldest: but that my pitie might not make him
think worse of himselfe, I foorthwith withstood my selfe,
and with a more couragious countenance, I began to put
him in hope that hee might recover his health, so soone as
hee shoulde see his friendes and parents, who did earnestly
looke for him, and so soone as he might have the advice
and counsell of some good Phisition of that Citie there.
Whither not long after the Duke being come to see the most
excellent Princes Leonor of Austria his cosen, and under-
standing the just desire hee had to see againe our house,
he was content with his departure, and to let him be heere
for the space of sixe dayes. Therupon we thinking good
to assemble the most excellent Phisitions of this Citie,
hee feeling himselfe by this time weery of the purgations
hee had alredy taken, and besides the Winter approaching,
thought best to deferre this cure untill the Spring time,
what time hee hoped to be in Italy, with his Maisters leave:
not onely to seeke remedie for his sicknesse, and to preserve
himselfe from greater evill, but also to passe the rest of his
life in quietnesse. While he was in this deliberation, in
commeth Maister Anniball Magnocavalli our neighbour,
aswell in house as in hearte, who besides the name he hath
gotten of an excellent Philosopher and Phisition, for the
diversitie of Arts wherewith he is indued, is counted in the
number of those which are called Generals, and by his good
behaviour maketh himselfe so acceptable, that I marvel
nothing at all if in so little time which hee remained with
the Gentleman, he stirred up in his hart by his delightfull
devise, an extreeme desire to enjoy longer time his pleasant
companie. Neither was maister Anniball lesse glad to

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

have founde my brother according to his minde : Where-
upon drawne by a soden and mutuall affection, they gave
occasion eche to other to visite one another so often as
conveniently they might. And so great was the curtesie
of the Phisition, that not suffering my brother to take the
paines to visite him, hee came the nexte day, and founde
him at the Table, but newe dyned After that, with-
drawing themselves into a little closet, where I use to have
a few small bookes, rather for a shewe then for studie, they
there passed a great parte of the day (which they continued
the three nexte dayes following) with many notable dis-
courses, which my brother to pleasure tooke recount unto
me in the evening following : and for that I thought them
so well seasoned, that they might long time bee preserved
to the profite of posteritie, ever since my brothers departure,
until this present, I have been gathering together their
discourses, which in effect were like to these which followe
heere.

THE FIRST
BOOKE

GUAZZO. ANNIBALL.



GREATLY give God thanks (Maister Annibal) for that having visited mee with a long, and perchaunce a curelesse disease, to cleanse my wretched soule of some wicked humour, he ministreth also meanes unto mee, sometimes whereby I may passe away my evill with lesse annoy, as this day I doubt not but I shall have by meanes of your acceptable presence, whereof I receive more assistance and contentment than I am able to expresse.

ANNIB. I have cause (Maister Guazzo) to thinke well of you, for many causes, but chiefly I feele my selfe forced thereto, for that I see you take your sicknesse of the hands of God (most good and full of power, from whom all thinges

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST proceede) and to shewe a Christian modestie in laying the
BOOKE fault on your selfe : that certesse is a thought sutable to the crosse you beare on your breast. But I will not heerefore commend you so much, but that I must reprehende you a little (and beare with mee if I speake plainly unto you) for that you call this your disease, in a manner curelesse, and seeme to distrust, that hee which hath sent it you, cannot likewise rid you of it. Touching the opinion you have of my presence, I wil neither blame you nor praise you for it : But you may assure your selfe, that in steede of those signes of good will which I cannot shewe outwardly, I beare you an inward affection in my heart, readie prest to doe you service. But I pray you make not strange to let me understande your state, not as a Phisition (for that as nowe would stand you in small steed) but as a friend, from whom you ought not to hide your mishaps.

GUAZ. My brother hath alreadie promised me of you, al that may bee looked for of a skilfull Phisition, and singular friende. But for that I am to returne into Italy, at a season more convenient for the cure of those which are sick, I ment to have stayed till then to open unto you my woundes, and amongst the rest, those of the heart, which I feele oppressed with so great melancholie, that in my fancy, I had good reason to say, that my evill is perhaps incurable, seeing it hath weeried to no purpose almost all the Phisitions of Paris and Fraunce.

ANNIB. Touching the infirmitie of the body, in deed it is requisite of necessitie to stay till the Winter be past, to heale it, if urgent necessitie constraine you not to use more speedie remedie : but to the maladie of the mind, you ought at al times to apply apt remedies, indeavouring so much as you may possibly, to be meerie, and to tread under foote al irksome thoughts which molest you.

GUAZ. I do verily, as you advise me, willingly imploy all the time my bounden service will spare mee, and all the leisure I can get, in some honest pleasure : but for al that, I cannot forget nor drive away my troublesome thoughts.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. One that is sicke, ought chiefly to consider the things that helpe him, and the thinges that hurt him, to the ende to eschewe the one, and insue the other. And therefore I should thinke it good, you shoulde call to your remembrance such thinges as you have founde by long experience to have increased or diminished this your anguish of mind, or melancholie, as you please to terme it. THE FIRST
BOOKE

GUAZ. I remember I have plainly noted, that the company of many is greivous unto me, and that contrariwise, solitarinesse is a great comfort and ease of my travels. And though for the service of my Prince, I must of force bee conversant not only with other Gentlemen his servants, but also in the Court, to discourse and deale with divers persons of divers countries and nations, yet I do it against the heart, and I goe to it as the Torteise to the inchauntment: for I feele it a great travell to my minde, to understand other mens talk, to frame fit answeres thereto, and to observe suche circumstances, as the qualitie of the persons, and mine owne honer require: which is nothing els but paine and subjection. But when I withdrawe my selfe into my lodging either to reade or write, or to repose my self: then I recover my libertie, and let loose the raines thereof, in suche sorte, that having not to yeeld account of it selfe to any, it is altogether applied to my pleasure and comfort.

ANNIB. Doe you thinke to recover your health in continuing long that solitarie life?

GUAZ. I dare not say so.

ANNIB. It is now that I begin to feare least this maladie be perchaunce incurable.

GUAZ. And I nowe begin to know by your words that you are that plaine felow you told me you were. But if those which should put heart into me, discourage mee, how shall I bee able to comfort my selfe?

ANNIB. Goe to Gentleman, take heart at grasse, for your evill is easie to bee cured.

GUAZ. You have in your hands the weapons of Achilles, with the which you both wound and heale: but it must needs be, that of those two contrarie propositions, the one be false.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. Both the one and the other is true. For all the Phisitions not only of Fraunce, but of all Europe, no not Esculapius himselve, by any medicine, either simple or compound, can without great difficultie, give you the least helpe in the world, so long as you cease not (as I see you doe not) to proceede in your doings contrarie to their prescription and minde. On the other side, I can assure you aswell by that you have told me, as by certain signes which I begin to discie in you, that your evill is easie to bee cured : for that the medicine is in your owne handes, whereby in short time you may bee restored to your health. And to speake heereof more plainely, I must needes tell you, that to exempt your selfe out of this evill, you must first give your selfe to cut of the cause and originall thereof.

GUAZ. Howe shall I cut it of, if I know it not ?

ANNIB. I will let you knowe it : your evill commeth of the false imagination you have, by meanes wherof, like unto the flie which flieth about the candle, with pleasure, you purchase your death, and in steede of consuming and starving your evill, you give it nourishment. For thinking to receive solace by meanes of a solitarie life, you fill your self full of ill humors, which take roote in you, and there lie in waite readie to search out secrete and solitarie places conformable to their nature, and to flie all mirth and company : and as hidden flames by force kept downe are most ardent, so these corrupt humours, covertly lurking, with more force consume, and destroy the faire pallace of your minde. And therefore I would wish that, leaving that wrong opinion, wherby hitherunto you went about, cleane contrarie, to redresse your evil, you should change your order of proceeding, and to account solitarinesse for poyson, and companie, for an Antidote, and the foundation of life : and to frame your selfe to cast of solitarinesse as a concubine, and to take companie into your favour, as a lawfull spouse.

GUAZ. Yet I have heard many famous Phisitions of this opinion (which experience also sheweth) that to have health of body, it is necessarie to have contentment of minde.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. It is true, now what will you inferre of that ? THE FIRST

GUAZ. Mary if that be true, it shal folow likewise, that solitarines is good for the body, bicause it recreates the mind : what say you now ? BOOKE

ANNIB. I have alreadie shewed you, that the pleasure of solitarinesse (considering your complexion) is counterfeite, I now further proove it to you. For the true pleasure (to speake humanly) is that which naturally giveth pleasure to al persons in generall. And therefore, though solitarinesse be agreeable to melancholike persons, yet it is unpleasant to all other, which you shall better understand, if you marke howe some women with childe long to eate things which al other folke abhorre : and yet for all that we must not say that such meats are convenient, for though they please some women, yet commonly they are displeasing to al. And when the melancholike person, and the woman with childe shalbe rid, the one of his false imagination, and the other of her altered taste, they will have in hate the things above said.

GUAZ. You make mee now doubt least I bee in worse case then I am aware of : for you meane by your wordes to include me in the number of the melancholike, which have their wit so breeched, that they cannot discerne sweete from sowre. But if I flatter not my selfe, I have a whole minde within my crasy body, and my pleasure is common to other men of good taste : and though company pleaseth some, yet I knowe many of great valour and deepe understanding, which cannot away with company, and love solitarinesse so wel, as fishes doe the water : so that either I am besides my selfe, or els the definition which you have assigned to pleasure is besides the trueth : considering that not only conversation, but divers other pleasures, are acceptable to some, and irksome to other som. As it falleth out of games, of feasts, of Musicke, and other delightes, from which a great many men flie, and more willingly leane to grave matters, and these are for the most part men of good calling, and not of the common sort.

ANNIB. God graunt that I may never have more occasion

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE to doubt that your brain is distempered, then it ever entred into my thought to say it, and if I shold say it, rather I (then you) might be thought scarce wel in my wits: your reasons make nothing against the definition which I assigned to pleasure, but rather confirme it. For those which like not of games, musicke, Feasts, and companies, have either by long studie, and great contemplation, or by som other accident, got an habite and custome to be melancholik. And though in the world there be found a greater number of these then of the other, yet in this they make no number, for that in these pleasures before said, they have lost their taste by chaunce, not by nature, whereas those pleasures do delight naturally. By this same reason we are to set downe this other ground, That man, being a compaignable creature, loveth naturally the conversation of other men, and doing the contrarie, he doth offend nature her self: for which fault many have done penance. For som by remaining inclosed in these voluntarie prisons, become ill favoured, leane, forlorne, and filled full of putrified blood, by meanes whereof, their life and manners come to corruption. Insomuch that some take after the nature of savage beasts, some waxe couragelesse, and stand in feare of their owne shadowes. I cease to rehearse unto you what hath happened to divers men, who by living long time in solitarinesse, have falne into such vehement and frantike fansies, that they have given occasion to bee laughed at, and pitied. Wherefore waying the things which are to bee read in writers concerning those kind of men, and the things which I my selfe have seene, I thinke nothing at all strange that which is reported of a poore seelie soule, who thinking himselfe to be transfourmed into a grain of Millet, for a long time durst not come foorth of his chamber, for feare the poultrie would eate him up. And as it is not possible without great labour and sleight to take away the false imagination from these kind of Melancholike persons, so there are other sortes of them, that have made themselves away by the meanes either of water, or fire, or sworde, or by throwing themselves headlong

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

from on high, or els at the ending of their daies, by their THE FIRST
naturall death they have given some certaine testimonie BOOKE
of their follie. Like as the melancholike Athenian did,
who no lesse at his death, then in his life time, refusing the
conversation of men, left these verses upon his Tombe :

Heere doe I lie, ne am the same
I heeretofore was woont to bee :
Thou Reeder never aske my name,
A wretched end God send to thee.

GUAZ. I am satisfied in this point, and I yeeld unto you,
that solitarines is an enemy to health : but I would know
on the contrarie side, what pleasure I may looke for by
Conversation, seeing that for one man which I meet with
to my minde, I light uppon more then a hundred, which
either by ignorance, either by pride, either by follie, either
by ambition, either by altercation, or by unseemely be-
haviour, doe so vexe and trouble me, that my minde and
bodie both receive great hurt thereby.

ANNIBALL. I have no marveile of that, for the number
of the insufficient, is farre greater then of the accomplished,
yet it is your part, so much as you may, to leave those, and
leane to these : and seeing our age doeth so participate
with the qualitie of yron, that there are not any to be
found of the golden world with whom you may be conver-
saunt, it is not amisse to call to minde that common pro-
verbe amongst countrie men, That wee must not leave to
sowe corne for feare least the byrdes eate it up : so likewise
we must not sticke to come foorth of our doores, to doe our
businesse in dealing with men, for feare of ill companie.
As if you were bounde from Padua to Venice, you will not
let slip oportunitie, for that you will not imbarke your
selfe in a vessel wherin there are sometime men, women,
religious, seculer, Souldiours, Courtiers, Almans, French-
men, Spaniards, Jewes, and other of divers nations and
qualities. And therefore wee must force our will, and make
it sometime content it selfe with that it liketh not, whereof
followeth a vertue of necessitie. Touching this I will tell

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST you, that the place and time have sometime forced mee to
BOOKE be present (rather with my bodie then minde) in the companie of those persons, which I could verie ill away withall, as beeing altogether different from my manner of life and profession: from whom neverthelesse I could not withdrawe my selfe, least I shoulde bee thought to take upon mee, either too much gravitie, or too little courtesie. And though at the first I was in my dumpes, yet afterwarde I went away well pleased and joyfull: seeing that I had so well framed my selfe to the humours of others, and that I had got my selfe honestly away being verie well thought of by the companie when I was gone: so likewise, when you shall be acquainted with the course of the worlde, and when by long use, you shal be brought to abide the companie of suche manner of people, you shal perceive, that if it be not good for your health, yet at least it shal not be hurtfull.

GUAZ. I plainly perceive the understanding you have, as well of thinges belonging to the vertue of the minde, as the health of the bodie: And for that I love of life to heare such discourses, I should bee verie glad (if it might so please you) wee might enter into argument, which is more available to mans state of solitarines or conversation, for I would be loth you should at any time teach mee to take a medicine which might procure health to my bodie, and sicknesse to my minde, which I could never finde in my heart to doe, but had a great deale rather ende my dayes hardly in some desert.

ANNIBALL. There are certaine kindes of spectacles which make thinges shewe greater then they are: so your courteous good will maketh you go beyond the trueth, in the judgement of my knowledge, which commeth nothing neere to that you speake of, and yet it is not so little, but it knoweth that the Gentleman which warneth and summoneth me to this combat, is verie well appointed of weapons and courage. Yet notwithstanding, without loosing any more time in excusing my ignorance, I am readie to heare most willingly whereupon your opinion is grounded, which seemeth to

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

incline to solitarinesse, to the intent to answere you, not **THE FIRST**
learnedly, but according to the abilitie of my weake **BOOKE**
capacitie.

GUAZ. Thinke not, I beseech you, that I enter into the
lystes against you, like a subtile Logitian, for I never
learned the places from whence argumentes are drawn,
and that which I say, is rather of mine owne opinion, then
by any judgement or learning: but my desire is to give
you occasion to give mee some light of knowledge, being
willing rather to understande, then to withstande: for
when you make answere to my demaundes, I take so great
pleasure in it, that I may say with the Poet Dant:

Your resolutions, doe me content so well,
That I delight as much to aske, as if my selfe could tel.

ANNIB. I attribute all that to your curtesie. Nowe I
will tell you touching this matter, that if we will doe our
diligent endeavour to searche out the effectes of solitarinesse
and Conversation, howe many sortes there are of them, and
howe they are to be understood, wee shall soone be agreed,
and we shall not neede to imploy much time in reasoning
of the matter. Whereupon I would have us differ, and a
litle suspend these severall pointes, and first intreate of this
matter in generall, that thereby I may have occasion to
enjoy longer your delightfull and discrete communication.
But I will not forget (as one that tendreth your health) to
put you in remembrance, that it is not good for your sickly
bodie to occupie your minde over earnestly, in considering
the matter over deeply: for oftentimes the desire of gain-
saying and to have the upper hande in reasoning, doth
inflame, distemper, and distroy the bodie: And thereof
come oftentimes reumes which deceive many Phisitions,
and make them judge that they proceede of contrarie
causes. Wherefore I advise you for your health, and mine
also, not to bee too earnest in this discourse, and so I shall
with more ease be able to answere you.

GUAZ. I am not (sir) any of those vainglorious persons,
which contende earnestly, to the intent to be counted

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST more brave fellowes then other : I will utter plainly those
BOOKE things which I remember to have heard heretofore of the
learned, and which shall be put into my head by the spirite
of reason, referring afterward the whole to your sound and
perfect judgement.

ANNIB. I am verie glad our discourses are rather familiar
and pleasaunt, then affected and grave : and I protest for
my parte, many tymes (as occasion shall serve) to let you
heare Proverbes, which verie Artificers have in their mouth,
and comptes, which are used to bee told by the fire side,
both for that I naturally live by suche foode, and also to
give you occasion to doe the like, and thereby to have an
eye as well to the health of the bodie, as the minde.

GUAZ. I promise to imitate you so much as I may, and
to fall nowe to the skirmishe : I say first, that to climbe to
the true service of God, and the enjoying of those heavenly
incomprehensible and eternall benefites which he hath
promised to his faithfull, the desartes, al by places and
solitarie, are the right ladders. And contrariwise, companies
are nought els but hookes and tonges, which withdrawing
us by force out of the course of our good thoughtes, set us
in the way of distruction : for that this life beeing full of
susptions, deceites, lasciviousnesse, perjuries, detractions,
envy, oppressions, violences, and other innumerable mis-
chiefes, a man can not turne his eyes aside, but that he
shalbe forced to beholde some evil thing or other, which
entereth and insinuateth it selfe by a broad way unto the
heart, where afterwarde are planted those venomous graftes,
which growe to the destruction of the soule. The which
never happeneth to the solitarie, who being safe from all
intiments, intanglings, and surprises, being altogether
out of love with the worlde, is whollie raised up to the
contemplation of his originall and happie state. Like-
wise, whosoever will obtaine Gods assistance by his prayers,
must abandon companies, and withdrawe him selfe to his
chamber (for so God expresly commaundeth) and therefore
it is no merrell if hee were so well pleased with the devout
workes wrought especially in the wildernesse by the first

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Helias, and Jeremie, THE FIRST
neither ought the example of our first father to way any BOOKE
lesser with us, who was as happie while hee lived in solitari-
nesse, as hee was after miserable and griefefull when hee
was in companie. I could heere rehearse unto you many
persons, who knowing that the vanities of the worlde, and
Conversation amongst men, were impediments to the
service of God, and their owne salvation, have joyfully
left their proud Palaces, their great riches, their high
degrees, the companie of their familie, friendes, and
parents, to cloyster up them selves in poore Monasteries,
there, to ende their life in holinesse and patience. But if
the examples alreadie recited bee of no force with you,
looke upon the doings of Christ, who being to make his
prayers unto God his Father, went up to the mountaine :
beeing to fast, kept himselfe solitarie, and got into
desertes at the death of John Baptist. Now if we wil
consider, besides the service of God, howe muche the soli-
tarie life availeth to our instruction and happie life, we can
not but curse whether it were Saturne or Mercury, or
Orphey, or Amphion, or whosoever it were, who gathered
and assembled together into one bodie, the people scattered
abroade in Forrestes and Mountaines, where they followed
nature in stead of lawe, not crediting the subtile persuasions
of other, but their owne giltlesse conscience, and leading a
loyall, simple, and innocent life, had not yet whetted their
tongues to slaunder their neighbours, gave not their mindes
to cruelties, neither had infected and corrupted their
manners with the contagion of vices, which began to growe
hot in the Cities and assemblies of men. And for that cause
you see that naturally all persons indued with knowledge
and vertue (to avoyde the common sort which delighteth
in company) withdrawe themselves with great pleasure into
by-places, and distant from the people, to have leasure for
their goodly and laudable contemplations. And if this be
true, as no doubt it is, that the Philosophers excell all other
men so farre as light doeth darknesse, it is a plaine case,
that to saile surely in the deepe sea of divine Philosophie,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST wee ought to take wary heede to flie, more then Scylla and
BOOKE Charibdis, the Conversation of men, as they did : not only
getting themselves out of the prease of people, but setting
light by, and refusing the government of common weales,
and those chief honours and offices which ambitious men
goe all day long with great labour and are canvassing and
craving for. And though it shall seeme perchance unto
you, that Conversation and companie is naturally desired
of all men, yet remember your selfe of the sentence which
once you brought against me, which, if you be an indifferent
judge, ought to have place against your selfe in the same
case : which is, that a man must not make reckoning or
account of the multitude of people, which either for the
desire of some vaine pleasure, or vile gaine, or fickle and
transitorie promotions, are alwayes in companie and Con-
versation : and heerein we ought to followe the opinion
of the Philosopher, who at his returne from the Bathes,
being asked whether there were in them any great number
of men, answered, no : and a litle after, as one asked him
if there were good store of people, answered, yea. Where-
fore you must agree with mee, that if Conversation yeeelde
pleasure or profite, it is for the most part to the ignorant
and carelesse, to whom solitarinesse is a kinde of torment :
for that being alone they are good for nothing but to count
the clocke, which they thinke goeth too slowly. Whereupon
riseth the saying, That leasure without learning, is a death
and sepultary of a live man, which never happeneth to the
learned, who then only live, when being sequestred from
others (not men if I may lawfully say it) they get them-
selves into this earthly Paradise of solitarinesse, where
they feede their minds with the most pleasant Nectar¹ of
lerning. Neither is it any thing ridiculous, which Diogenes
merily and mistically did, who going to the church doore,
as the people went out, thrust into the midst of them, and
at length got into the Church, saying, it was the part of
such as he was, to be alwayes contrarie to the multitude :
which was to shewe, that we ought according to the saying

¹ A pleasant liquour fained to be the drinke of the Gods.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of the Poet, To folow the fewer sort, and not the common THE FIRST
cruē. And that ment Pythagoras when he said, He kept BOOKE
not to passe by the common way. I could alledge unto
you many other things in prayse of the solitarie life, which
is by good right and reason singular, for that it is alone
the right life acceptable to God, and godly men, a friend
to vertue, an enemy to vice, the true institution and forme
of life. So that for my part most commonly I remaine
solitarie, and say alwaies in my heart (as that holy man
saide) The Citie is to me a prison, and solitarinesse a Para-
dise. But I will heere stay to heare your opinion of these
my reasons.

ANNIB. You have swarved nothing at all in this discourse
from the dutie of a perfect Courtier, whose propertie it is
to do all things with carefull diligence, and skilfull art :
mary yet so that the art is hidden, and the whole seemeth
to be doone by chaunce, that he may thereby be had
in more admiration. And so taking that course, you have
here commended solitarinesse, partly by reasons derived
from your owne good wit, and partly by the doctrine you
have learned of some famous writers, and specially of
Petrarch and Vida, of whose name and authoritie you have
made no mention, because you would hide that glorious
doctrine, which some that are learned use to discover, in
having alwaies in their mouth the name, assoone of some
Philosopher, assoone of some Poet, assoone of some Orator.
But yet you could not in suche sort cover this cunning, but
that I perceived it, and was thereby occasioned greatly to
commend your discrete judgement. Now for that I am of
a contrary opinion to yours, it standeth mee upon to
answere from point to point, to the reasons which you have
brought: whereof the first (if I be not deceived) is grounded
upon the service of God and our salvation, wherto in your
opinion Conversation is an hinderance: which truly I will
not sticke to graunt you, if you bee able to prove mee that
the service of God is only perfourmed by the meanes of
solitarinesse. But I am sure you will not denie me, that
he hath left us many commaundementes by his owne

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE

mouth, for the execution whereof, Conversation is necessary. For you cannot goe to visite the sicke, to releev the poore, to correct and admonishe your brother, to comfort the afflicted, if you remain alwaies mewed up. And therefore if you will have solitarinesse serve to appease the wrath of God, and to obtaine favour at his handes, you shoulde say that it is profitable and necessary onely for the time appointed for prayer. But for all that, I will not graunt you that it is a matter of necessitie, that wee should be ever alone when wee pray, for where our Lorde saide wee should enter into our chamber to make our prayers, it was spoken onely to reprehend hypocrites, which used to kneele praying openly at the endes of streetes, and with their solemne and counterfeite devotion, to make the people returne to beholde them, to admire them, and to repute them for men of a holy life. For wee see that God hath appointed the Church for Christians to assemble in. And albeit in all places devout and earnest prayers are acceptable unto him, yet wee are bound to goe seeke him in the holy Church ordeined to that end : where, either by reason of the most holy Sacramentes, whiche are there often celebrated, either by reason of the devout prayers of others, wee are stirred up to prayer with more fervent zeale and affection. Besides, we see that the religious do not make their praiers apart, but by the ordinances of the Church they assemble together in one Quire : where joyning their voyces together, they make as it were of many mindes one onely, framing a harmonie of divine prayses and devout praiers, for the peace of God, for the salvation of mankinde. And that congregation doeth not onely call men dayly from their worldly workes to divine service, but besides, hath great power, and is verie acceptable in the sight of God. Whereupon some have saide, that it is impossible, the praiers made by many together shoulde not bee graunted. Neither doeth it any thing remoove mee out of my settled opinion, the example which you propose of many, who of fleshly are become spirituall, of wealthie are willingly entred into miserie, and from their stately Palaces, have vowed them-

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

selves to beggerly monasteries : for these same though they have the name of solitarie, for that they are severed from us in this temporall life, yet they are gathered and assembled together in their Convents, where they not onely live and pray together amongst themselves, but also use conversation with us, in preaching, teaching, and doeing other thinges which apperteine to the profite of our soules. On the other side, wee secular men which have more inticements to do amisse, must consider that God hath given us Roses beset with thornes, the sweete with the sower, and hath given us understanding to discerne their qualities and difference. And though it were so that (as you say) a man can neither see nor heare the thing, which maketh not the right way to salvation rugged and uneasie, yet for all that, a good Christian ought not to stray out of it, but to have in minde this saying, That everie commoditie, bringeth with it a discommoditie. And when hee seeth him selfe assailed either with the temptation of pleasures, or the vexation of troubles, then is the time to get the gurland, by breaking in sunder those hookes, and hold-backs you spake of but now, for you know we must enter into the kingdome of heaven through tribulations and troubles. And although hee do wisely, who, to fly the combat of the fleshe against the spirit, retireth into some obscure and solitarie place, yet consider the great vertue and singular merite of him, who being placed in the midst of pleasures, forbeareth them, and maketh a conquest of him selfe : and think also with your selfe, how curious these solitary men are of their quiet, who wil neither see nor heare the plaintes of other, neither are partakers of our losse and hurts, neither are subject to the injuries, the threats, the blowes, the persecutions, the outrages, daungers, and ruines, which this poore vale of miserie is full of. Neither likewise doth the example of those first fathers make against me, who were not so given to solitarie-nesse, but that they had a care over their neighbours, which they manifested by more workes then you have need to heare, or I leasure to count. I deny not but Adam

THE FIRST
BOOKE

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST was happie, while he lived in solitarinesse, but for all that,
BOOKE you do not perceive, that God in giving him company, ment also to shew unto us, that Conversation liked him wel. The last example of Christ conteines in it a hidden meaning, different from the doings of men, for in praying, fasting, and mourning in the wilderness, his meaning was, if I bee not deceived, to let a Christian know, that to reape the fruites of those labours, it behooveth him to solitary him selfe from sin: and calling his wandring mind to this reckoning, it behoveth him to keepe it solitarie from al other thoughtes. For if with the sadnesse of the countenance, the fasting of the body, and the prayers of the mouth, the heart neither prayeth, fasteth, nor mourneth, Christ is not imitated, but it is the act of an hypocrite, who as the Poet saieth, covereth his conceits with a contrarie cloake. And if besides these woorkes of Christ hee had not been conversable, it had not gone well with us: for that disputing, preaching, healing the sicke, making the blinde to see, raying the dead to life, hee was conversant amongst us, the space of so many yeeres, with so many discommodities: and in the ende shed his innocent blood for our redemption. Seeing then while hee lived amongst us, hee left us an example and way, which wee ought to use in conversation, in my opinion you were to blame to curse him, who first with so great discretion gathered together the scattered people, which had not (I confesse) the knowledge of vices which raigne in cities and townes, marry no more had they the knowledge of sciences, of honest and civile behaviour, of friendship, of handicrafts, of woorkemanships, by meanes whereof they made themselves differ from savadge beasts, whom before they did resemble. And therefore it may justly bee saide, that who so leaveth the civile society to place himselfe in some solitarie desert, taketh as it were the forme of a beast, and in a certaine manner putteth upon him selfe a brutishe nature. So the common saying is, that there is no other name meete for a solitarie person, but either of a beast, or a tyrant. For that hee doeth violence to beasts, seasing and possessing himselfe of

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

forrests, of tops of mountaines, of their dennes, caves, and blinde abydings : Not seeing that the citie and assemblies of people are made to founde the temple of justice, and to appoint a law and forme to mans life, which before was disordered, and imperfect. You adde after ward, that learned men, and those of good wits, make no account but of the solitarie life, and you bring forth the philosophers, contemnners of the multitude, and lovers of solitarinesse. I might heere take large scope to make you answere, but using al the briefnesse I can, I say only, that those excellent men in learning and science love solitary places not by nature, but for lacke of their like, with whom they may be conversant : and I graunt you that there is nothing more displeasing to the learned, then the companie of the ignorant : which falleth out of the great diversitie and difference which is betweene them. But as the learned flye the ignorant, so they willingly seeke the companie of other that are learned, with whom, stirred by a certaine vertuous ambition, they make prooffe of their knowledge, giving and taking of the fruites which they have gathered with long travaile. You can not name mee any Philosopher so hard laced, and so rebellious against nature, who, when time and place served, had not conversation eyther with his schollers to teache, or with other Philosophers to reason, and to heare their reasons, and which was not desirous to have others followers of his doctrine. And therefore the doing of Diogenes, which you have rehearsed, served wel to shewe, that a Philosopher is contrary to the multitude, but not to disallowe conversation, which hee more accounted of then other Philosophers did. Wherefore I conclude, that if the learned and students love solitarinesse for lacke of their like, yet they naturally love the companie of those which are their like : In so much that many of them have travailed farre with great labour, to speake with other learned men, whose bookes they had at home in their houses. And though you alledge unto me, of these which have refused promotions, and publike offices, thinking it a thing blameworthy to bring their free minde into bondage,

THE 'CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST and to intangle it with the affaires of the worlde, yet there
BOOKE have been other excellent Philosophers, who by their writings (which are yet extant) have reprovved the opinion of those aforesaide, and that not without great reason : for giving themselves wholly to the studie of the sciences and contemplation, they altogether abandoned those persons, to whom by the Lawe of nature they were bounde to give succour, and considered not that (man being borne not onely for himselfe, but for his Countrie, parents and friends) hee seemeth either too farre in love with him selfe, or too farre out of love with others, which followeth not his proper nature to benefite others, beeing borne therunto. And therefore this sentence is well woorthy to bee written in letters of golde, that Hee utterly seeketh his owne shame, who onely seeketh his owne profite. Nowe if all the prayse of vertue consist in dooing, according to the opinion of the Philosophers, whereto serveth this dumbe and ydle Philosophie, whereof may bee saide as of fayth, that without woorkes it is dead, and profiteth no body, no not so much as to him who hath gotten it ? Who can not assure himselfe to have learned any science, if hee make it not knowen, and if hee perceive not that others which are learned allowe of it. And thereof commeth the proverbe, Betweene treasure buried under the ground, and wisdom kept hidden in the heart, there is no difference at all. And it may bee said that these same men resemble the covetous, which possesse treasure, but have it not : and that they are greatly to blame, which knowing howe to doe well, doe it not. For as Musicke, which is not hearde, is not had in estimation : so that Philosopher meriteth no honour, which manifesteth not his knowledge. * Which Socrates knew very wel, who, though no way else hee had deserved to bee counted the wisest man of the world, yet he deserved it only for this, that he was the first which brought moral philosophy down from heaven. For seeing al the Philosophers bent to the contemplation of nature, hee not only framed himselfe to get wisdom, to live wel, and to teach other to live, but gave himselfe altogether to the bringing

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

to perfection this part of Philosophie, which is so profitable and necessarie to our common life, and made the worlde to see the open folly of those, who will rather hide a candel under a bushell, then set it on a Candlesticke. Besides you knowe that these which like not of companie, howe learned soever they bee, take them from their schoole points, and matters of learning, shewe themselves so insufficient and such beastly fooles that most commonly they give occasion to every man to laugh at them. I have not yet forgotten many grosse follies of a Gentleman sometime my Schoolefellowe at Pad, who in learning was not inferiour to any scholler in the Universitie, but for the rest, you woulde have sayde, that hee had been one of these Owles who stande in feare of other byrds : in so much that his sottishnesse mooved mee to pitie him, especially one day, that having occasion to ride by hearing of the sodayne death of his father, hee bought a paire of Bootes, whereof the one was so strait that it wroong his legge and foote very sore, and the other was a great way to wide : And as wee blamed him that hee woulde suffer him selfe so to bee coosened : hee answered, That hee him selfe when hee bought his Bootes founde fault that there was suche oddes betweene them, but the shoemaker had sworne unto him that the greatest Boote was made of such leather as woulde shrinke in the wearing, and the other, of a hyde that woulde so retch, that in lesse then twoo dayes it woulde bee easier then the other : what say you of this ? Doe you not thinke that these men may bee called wise by learning, and fooles in respect of the common people. Therefore it was rightly saide of an ancient Poet, that experience is the father of wisdom, and memorie the mother, to shew, that it is needeful for him which wil attaine to the knowledge of humane thinges, not only to be provided of bookes, but besides, to have undoubted experience and practise touching the understanding of thinges : which beeing knowen, ought to be received and kept in minde, thereby to be able afterwarde to give him selfe counsaile, by the triall him selfe hath alredie made, and to guide him selfe and aide

THE FIRST
BOOKE

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST other, by the events hee hath before noted to have followed
BOOKE of like causes. And if you will knowe that this is true, consider that not onely in the profession of us Phisitions, but in other faculties likewise, speculation without practise is nothing certaine. But wee give more credite to an argument grounded on thinges, which wee have tried by reason, then in the simple Doctrine of other.

And you who have eaten much salt out of your owne house, are well able to judge howe wise and discrete your travaile hath made you, and howe much you differ from those who never heard the ringing of other belles then these here. And therefore to shewe the valour and wisdome of great Ulisses, with good reason it was saide to his immortall praise,

That many countries he had seene,
and in their manners wel was seene.

I thinke I have sufficiently confuted your reasons, without I should force or straine my selfe, as I could very well, to make you a more peremptorie and waightie answere, which I will leave to doe, thinking you are content with this, and that you have spoken of this matter, rather to give me to understand your great wit, then to maintaine in good earnest this opinion: For the same which have taught you this false doctrine, have likewise taught you the true, and I am sure you are not ignorant that Petrarch, notwithstanding all the prayses he attributeth to the solitary life, was not to learne, that without Conversation our life woulde bee defectuous. For hee hath been no such enemy to good company, but that these wordes have escaped forth of his mouth,

Had I beene with her:

But that he hath frequented Courts, and entred into amitie with many Princes and Gentlemen, I speake not of Hierosme Vida, for that not so much in respect of the workes hee hath written, being gotten alone by himselfe, as for the learning hee shewed by word of mouth in publike counsaile: and for that hee had long time used the Court

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of Rome, and by his deedes given other good example to THE FIRST
doe well, he hath gotten not onely the myter, under which BOOKE
hee hath a great while governed the flocke committed unto
him, but besides, hath wonne the credite of a Prelate
worthy of a higher degree. Moreover, that hee exalteth
the solitary life, to the intent to shewe his great wit, in
debasng it afterwards with divers and invincible reasons :
amongst the which he affirmeth that all beasts so soone as
they are delivered from their damme get upon their feet,
and are able to stand a high alon, which nature woulde
not graunt to man, who, so soone as hee is borne, needeth
the assistance and support of others. If that reason bee
not sufficient, hee addeth that the same nature hath given
speech to man, not to the ende to speake to himselfe,
which were to no purpose, but to the ende it might stande
in steede towards other. And you see that the tongue
serveth us to teache, to demaunde, to conferre, to traffike,
to counsaile, to correct, to dispute, to judge, and to expresse
the affection of our hearte : meanes whereby men come to
love one another, and to linke themselves together. And
hee concludeth at the end, that a man can not attaine to
any science, if it bee not taught him by some other. You
see then (Gentleman) that conversation is not onely profit-
able, but moreover necessary to the perfection of man, who
must confesse that hee is lyke the Bee which cannot live
alone. And therefore according to the grave opinion of
the Stoikes, we must thinke that as all thinges upon the
earth are made for the use of man, so man is created for
the use of man, to the intent that following nature as their
guide and Mistres, they have to succour one another, to
communicate together common profites, in giving and
receiving, uniting and binding themselves together by artes,
occupations, and faculties : so that hee may repute him-
selfe an unfortunate man, which hath not the meanes by
conversation to purchase his owne profite and other mens :
a punishment inflicted by the lawes on some offenders for
a kinde of torment. For there is no greater affliction then
to live amongst men, and to bee deprived of the ayde and

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE
companie of men. And to ende my talke, there is heere on earth no pleasure to bee received without companie, which made Architas Tarentinus to say that if any might by Gods permission ascend to heaven, and there beholde the nature of the worlde, and the beautie of the starres, that sight woulde bee no great delight unto him, if hee had not some or other to whom he might impart it and tel what he sawe.* You may perceive then heereby, that neither aire, fire, nor water, affoorde us more aide in al our needs then conversation doth. But if perchaunce al these things be not sufficient to proove this matter unto you, I am redy to bring you (touching this) many other reasons, so substantiall as these already rehearsed.

GUAZ. I am forced to say with the Poet,

Neither yea neither nay, can I resolve flatly to say :

For notwithstanding I feele my selfe greatly comforted with your gentle discourse, yet there sticke in my stomacke some doubts, which make me say unto you, that as the step-mother by extreeme hatred discerneth not the vertues of her sonne in law, and the mother by excessive love on the contrary side knoweth not the imperfections of her own sonne : so you likewise shew your selfe to be surprised with the same passions, to find fault with solitarinesse, and commend conversation, for so much as you have not told the good which ariseth of the solitary life, nor the evill which commeth of conversation. Wherefore to manifest and discover that which you keepe secret, I say unto you, that my meaning was not to defende and commend those persons, who, moved either by some sodaine toy which taketh them in the head, or of some melancholy humor, rather then of any good minde, doe altogether withdrawe themselves into solitary places, and take no keepe to knowe what wee doe in the worlde : but I account them for dead, or at least for men which are good neither for themselves nor other : and being not willing to put in practise their vertue to their owne profite, nor to teache it to others which stande in neede of it, I use to compare them to the Foxe, who had

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

rather bruze and breake his tayle against the ground to no profit, then to give a little of it to the Ape to cover his privy parts. Likewise I never meant to deny, but that in haunting the companie of men, a man may doe woorkes acceptable to God ; my opinion was, and is yet, that to the perfection of man (which if I bee not deceived consisteth chiefly in knowledge) solitarinesse is more avayleable then conversation. And for prooffe thereof, you see howe those which busie themselves in the affaires of the worlde, are for the most parte without learning, and contrariwise, those which covet to get learning, seeke it not in publike places amongst a multitude of men, but in their studies and privie Chambers. Neither is it to purpose to say, that some learned, waxe sots and fooles in company, for that this foolishnesse is esteemed to bee so, onely by the vulgar sorte, who, seeing them unskilful howe to make courtesie after the newe fashion, howe to set the cappe aside, howe to daunce in measure, and keepe time with the musike, and howe to floute another finely, according to the common fashion, laugheth them to scorne and maketh small reckoning of them : But for all that, they are favoured and honoured amongst other learned men, who take for plainnesse of manners and gentlenesse of minde, that which the common sorte calleth foolishnesse. Nowe let us turne the leafe, I pray you, and set one of these scoffers in the midst of a company of learned men, and you shall see him straightway, either to bee stroke dumbe to his shame, or else to speake to his dishonour : like as hee, who being by chaunce amongst certaine learned men, which reasoned of the excellency of Poets, pricked forward by his owne ambitious ignorance, interrupted their talke, saying, that without any more contention, Horace was to bee preferred before all other Poets : for that Petrarch was of that opinion, and had already preferred him before Homer and Virgil : and being required to bring forth that opinion of Petrarch, hee answered forthwith,

If Virgil and Homer had seene,
Horace alone gainst all Tuscanes :

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE

Whereupon they fell to laughing more hartily, then the schollers your friends did for the jest of the bootes : and the laughter begunne afresh after, when being required to shew the meaning of Petrarch in those verses, hee added, that hee meant to say that neither Virgil nor Homer, nor all the Poets of Tuscan were able to incounter Horace alone. Nowe if the scholler fell into a certaine tollerable lightnesse of believe, this fellowe stumbled upon a corrupt persuasion in opinion. Whereby I am induced to thinke that learning without experience is more certaine, then experience without learning, and I had rather have the name of a simple scholler, then of an ignorant Courtier. Whereupon I wil infer, that whosoever will attaine knowledge, and sounde the depth of it, must (as the artificers say) see to the shoppe, and not walke the streetes all the day long, and brave it out before the people. But put the case that many commendable effects come of conversation, yet put the discommendable in ballance against them, and they will overway them a great deale. For that the number of the good is so smal and scant, that though you be never so well given, you cannot continue so, but you shalbe driven to change, and to thinke with your selfe that hee which sleepeth with the dogs, must rise with the flees. And hereof the Cretensians being assured, when they wished ill to any, they forspake him that he should take delight in haunting ill companie, meaning, that thereby hee shoulde come to confusion. Besides that wee are now growen to this point that you can not behave your selfe so well, but that you shall receive a thousand injuries, if not in life (which is not it selfe very safely warranted) yet at least in good name. And at this day the malice of men is so great, that they spare not the honour of whosoever it bee, whether Prince or private person, and thinke sinisterly and preposterously of all the good deedes which are wrought : in such sorte that if you addict your selfe to devotion, and the exercise of charitie, you are taken for an hypocrite. If you be affable and courteous, you shalbe called a flatterer. If you succour any desolate widowe, you shall by and by heare a

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

voice which saith : I knowe what foloweth. If through heedlessnese you resalute not a friend, hee will speake no more to you. If you defend one that is oppressed, take heede you bee not taken out of your house at undue tyme. Thinke not to be spared for that you make not profession of a souldiour : for nowe they wil not stick to beate even doctors and advocates, to hinder them from defending their clyents. But to what end goe I to loose my selfe in the intricate labirinth of the abuses and disorders of our time. I wil get out presently, and perswade my selfe, that vices should be banished out of the world, if conversation were taken out of it : seeing that adulteries, robberies, violences, blasphemies, murthers, and infinite other evils, are learned by the conversation of men, and by meanes of the same are committed.

ANNIB. You made a shewe at the beginning to yeld unto me, and yet neverthesse are risen against me with a second assault. But notwithstanding I will not cease to assay with other answeres, to set an ende (if it bee possible) to our controversie. And for that you grounde learning uppon solitarinesse, I must first aske you, of whom the principles of sciences and learning are for the most part learned ?

GUAZ. Of Maisters.

ANNIB. You shall bee then taken in your owne net, seeing by these words you graunt unto me, that the beginning and end of learning dependeth of conversation. And verily as the armourer can not assure him selfe of the goodnesse of a corselet, untill such time as he hath seene it prooved with the launce or harquebouse : so neither can a learned man assure him selfe of his learning, untill he meete with other learned men, and by discoursing and reasoning with them, bee acertaind of his sufficiencie. Whereby it seemeth to me verie cleere, that conversation is the beginning and end of knowledge. But for that you adde, that men conversant in the Court and common wealth are voide of learning, I must put you in minde touching that point, that as there are divers sciences, artes, and professions, so likewise is the life of men divers, who as it pleaseth

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE God, are called some to merchandise, some to warfare, some to phisicke, some to the lawes. And for that all these tend to one ende, to get by these meanes honour and profite, you see that every one of these divideth his life into two partes : the one, to learne those thinges which may serve to lead him to the end I have spoken of: the other, to put them in practise. And for example, you have alredie purposed with your selfe to bee Secretarie to a Prince, I am not ignorant, that by reason of the good partes which are in you, you are to looke for reputation and commoditie therby, and to bethinke you of the good hap of those, who from that degree have been raysed to Cardinals and Vicars of Christ. And therefore to make your selfe fit for that office, you have learned the Latin and Tuscan tongue, and so many arts as are necessarie for that purpose: and by your perfect style in wryting, and great discretion in handling matters, you have wonne the reporte and name of an excellent Secretarie. All other men doe the like, amongst whom there are some, who giving their mindes either to husbandry, or to merchandise, care for no more learning, but to reade, wryte, and cast a count. And albeit amongst learned men, these same are not able to discourse of Rhetorike or of Poetry, yet are they not therefore to bee blamed, neither may wee say they are bereaved the knowledge of good letters by reason of conversation, for that from the beginning of their life they have determined not to meddle with studie, and it sufficeth them to bee esteemed wise, and well seene in their owne profession. But a scholler is well worthy to be laughed at, and reprooved, who applying him selfe altogether to studie, doeth not frame his learning to the common life, but sheweth him selfe altogether ignorant of the affaires of the world. And I will say unto you moreover, that it were a great errour to beleieve, that learning is more gotten in solitarinesse amongst Bookes, then in the companie of learned men. For this is a maxime in Philosophy, and experience sheweth it, That learning is easilier gotten by the eares then by the eyes: neither should a man neede to dimme his sight, and weare his fingers in

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

turning over the bookes of wryters, if hee might alwayes see them present, and receive by hearing that natural voyce, which by wonderfull force imprinteth it selfe in the minde.

THE FIRST
BOOKE

Besides that, if you chaunce to reade some harde and obscure place, you can not intreate the booke to expounde it unto you, but you shalbe fayne sometime to goe your way from it discontented, saying, If thou wilt not be understood, I wil not understande thee. Whereby you may knowe that it is much better to talke with the living, than with the dead. Againe I note this, that the spirite of a solitarie man waxeth dul and lither, having none to stirre it up and awake it in demanding some question touching his learning, and in reasoning upon it : or else he waxeth hautie and proude by vaine beliefe, for not comparing any with himselfe, hee attributeth too much to himself. On the contrary side, he which heareth other to commend his studies, hath them in more admiration : hee which is reprehended, amendeth his faults : hee which is any thing negligent, is pricked forward by his corrivals which seeke to outgoe him in glory. And as hee thinketh it a great shame to come behind his equals, so doeth hee count it a great honour to bee able to goe before his betters. But above al other things the commendable controversies which arise amongst learned men have most force to quicken the spirits. For by disputing they learne, and that which they learne in that manner, they understande best, they expounde best, and remember best. And while they dispute by lively reasons, indeavouring to get the upper hand ech of other, the perfect knowledge of things is come by, and therupon it is commonly saide that Disputation is the sifter out of the trueth. And for so much as the trueth is taken from the common consent and opinions of men, those opinions can not be knowen but by conversation and companie, which the Poets meant to shew and infer, reporting that though Jupiter was God omnipotent, yet he called the other gods to counsaile, and heard their opinions. But let us set fables aside, doe we not knowe that the waighty and wonderful institutions of the holy church proceede not

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

from the Pope onely, but from the holy general counsailes where they have bin discreetly wayed, and allowed? Besides, is it not the fashion of al princes, where there is question of the affaires of their estates, because they wil doe nothing of their owne heads, to assemble their counsaillours, and to determine matters according to their advise? Commonweales, Cities, yea smal townes, do they not assemble together to choose officers, and to establish orders by common consent? Is it not the use of Magistrates to take the common advise and opinion of their assistentes? and we phisitions do we not the like in our assemblies and Colledges, wherein wee take resolution touching the healing of the sicke, by the advise and judgement of the greater part? Did not Apelles take delight to set his pictures abroad, and to shroud himself secretly neere unto them, to heare the opinion of the beholders, and when many were of one mind in reprehending some part, did not hee mend it according to the common voices and opinions? * And did not another painter say, that the people was the maister of whom he had learned his art? * And lastly, was it not the use of a wise Emperour (whose name I now remember not) to send spies abroad every day, to harken what was said of him, altering somtimes upon that occasion his maner of dealings, and reforming his life from good to better, according to the reports were made unto him? Verily, he hazardeth too much, who reposeth himselfe in his own judgement. And it is a common saying, that he doth wel, which counsayleth himselfe wel: For which cause counsel is esteemed for a holy thing. I am not able sufficiently to expresse the great good, which cometh of conversation, and of the knowledge which entreth in by the eares and sinketh into the mind, comming from the mouth of learned men. But I wil tel and remember you of the honorable Academies, or Universities, which for that purpose have been instituted in many cities of Italy, amongst which we must not forget to speake of that in Mantua, founded in the house of the most famous Lord Cæsar Genzaga, a mightie prince, and a special patrone

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of learned men : neither that in Pavia, which flourisheth **THE FIRST**
prosperously, by reason of the great number of students. **BOOKE**
But perchance it is a thing to be mervailed at, that in that
litle citie of Casal the Academie of the *Illustrati* maketh
so gallant a shew. But for that the time serveth not to
speake of the excellencie therof, to returne to the matter in
question, I say, that the fruite which is gathered by these
Academies is inestimable, and that they know wel what they
do, which have any doings in them. For knowing that
one alone cannot of himselfe attaine to many sciences, for
that an art is long, and life is short, there they may obtaine
whatsoever they desire. For some discoursing of divinitie,
some of humanitie, some of Philosophy, some of Poetry,
and other divers matters, they partake mutually and in
common, of that which every one privately with great paine
and long study hath learned : by the example of those,
who beeing not able to live of themselves, and make good
cheere at their table, meet together with other of their
neighbors in one place, and bring every one their cates
with them, and thereof make a sumptuous feast. And ther-
fore it hath bin very profoundly said, that man is a god unto
man, for that one receiveth so great pleasure and comfort
of another. Which selfe thing is represented unto us by
the picture of the blinde man, carying uppon his backe the
lame creeple, who teacheth him the way : and therupon
wel saith Almanni :

So of twoo halfes the whole is fitly made,
the one with eyes, the other with feete doth aide.

I say then againe, that conversation is the full perfection
of learning, and that it more avayleth a student to discourse
one houre with his like, then to studie a whole day by him-
selfe in his studie. Yea and in conferring with his com-
panions, if he have understood any thing amisse, he therby
most commonly commeth to the right meaning of the matter,
and cleereth his minde of many errorrs, * and beginneth
to perceiue that the iudgement of one alone may bee easily
darkened with the veile of ignorance, or of some passion,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST and that amongst a multitude, it seldome falleth out that
BOOKE all are blinded : and finally, upon prooffe he knoweth that
vertue and knowledge set foorth in bookes, is naught else
then a painted vertue : and that true vertue and learning,
is gotten rather by practise then by reading.* But it is
nowe time to answere you, touching the inconveniences
which are incurred (as you say) by conversation, which
make us turne out of the right way, and alter our good
purposes, by accompanying with men of lewde behaviour.
And though in my fancie you might satisfie your self with
some reasons alreadie alledged, yet I will say further that
it is true, that as some diseases of the body are infectious,
so the vices of the minde take from one to another, so that
a drunkard draweth his companions to love wine, a Carpet
knight corrupteth and effeminateth a valiant man : and
so much force hath continual conversation, that oft times
against our wils, we imitate the vices of others. Thereupon
it is saide, that the friends and familiers of Aristotle had
learned to stammer : the friends of Alexander in discours-
ing, had got his roughnesse of speech : and dout not, but
in haunting the companie of the evil, a man shal find by
experience that a man is a wolfe to a man, not a God as
I said before, and that according to the proverbe, A friend
of fooles wil become like unto them, * and hee which
toucheth pitch shalbe defiled therwith.* But in like case
also, and by the same reason on the contrary side, vertue
bringeth forth the like effect. * And as a dead coale, laied
to a lively, kindleth : so a naughty person meeting in com-
panie with the good, partaketh with their conditions.*
Neither is a good aire and a mans owne native soile more
helpful to the health of the body, then the conversation
and companie of the good is to diseased minds. For if the
ill leave some seede of their naughtines with those that
cleave to them, by the same reason the good leave behinde
of their goodnesse, with those that frequent them. And
as from muske there commeth a sweete smel to delight the
nose, so from the good there goeth a certaine goodnes
towards those that are neere them, and most commonly

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

keepeth it selfe stil within them. Now for that the ground of your reasons is, for that in conversation a man cannot do so good workes, but that they shalbe taken against the heare, and wrongly interpreted, adding the dangers, hurts, and damages wherto they are subject, which use companie : I graunt heere unto you, that the good order and manner of living, is in a maner quite lost, but the fault and perversnes of other, should never make you repent your self of doing wel : and let speake who list, never take care of the censures and reprehensions which come from the blind commualty, which as ignorant, taketh every thing arsi-versie. But you ought to folow the allowable sentence of the Epicure, when he saith, I never coveted to please the people, for that they esteeme not the things, which I knowe, and for that I knowe not the things which they esteeme and commend. Besides, you must consider whether being withdrawne from company, and leading a solitarie life, you shall live in securitie, and be exempt from the injuries of the wicked. Nay loke not for it hardly, and assure your selfe, that for one yll word received in company, you shall receive a thousand living solitarily. For some one will not sticke to say (and perchance with some litle likelihood) that you have about you some filthy disease, or that you have committed some offence, and that you flye the light like a reeremouse : others wil say, that you are an heretike, for that you eschue the company of Christians, and they will seeke to put you into the Inquisition : others will call you an Alcumist, or a forger of money : and if all these suspicions aforesaid faile, yet at least you shal bee thought either fainte hearted, either stately, either fantastick, either melancholike, or els a brute beast : for that all these most commonly flye the company of men. So that by that meane you shal finde your selfe to be fallen (as the common proverbe is) Out of the frying pan into the fire, or out of a fever into the hot evil : and you shal be faine in the ende to return to the ordinary life, being resolved to thrust your self forward, and to live uprightly and well in spight of those that live yll : whose naughtinesse set against your

THE FIRST
BOOKE

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST vertue and goodnesse, will make it more excellent and
BOOKE famous, and you shall rejoyce more to your selfe, to see that
your vertue hath woon the victorie in the combate and opposition, you persisting in your goodries in the midst of their naughtinesse. You must consider it deserveth no great praise nor merit, to know how to be good amongst the good. Mary it is somewhat worth to be good amongst the yll. Also you must thinke, that amongst those false consterers, there wil be some upright judge and defendour of your deedes. And though all the men of the world should faile you, yet the high judgement of God will not faile you, in whom if you shall once repose your trust, you may be sure he wil holde his hande over you, and defend you against the malicious and slaunderous, and in spight of them will bring the trueth to light, and give it the upper hande. As I think I have fully answered you, and therefore without any further speech, you may know, that to get wisdom to come by the accomplishment of learning, and to come to dignitie, riches, and worldly promotions, Conversation is expedient. For to say, that every man should have an eye only to his owne affaires, is nothing els, but to make man like to beasts. And besides, it is most certaine, that solitarinesse putteth many evil things into our heades, and maketh us beleieve that which is not. Neither hath it any thing in it but horror and terroure, enemies to nature. According whereto, it is daily seene that a man being by him selfe is fearefull, and being in company, is couragious. * Yea, and being alone, is often tempted to commit many evils. Which, one Crates rightly signified, who seeing a young man walke in a secrete place, asked him what hee did there so alone: the young man answered, that he talked with him selfe: I pray you (saieth hee) take heede you talke not with some naughtie fellow What shall I say more? But that the hearbe Helleborum may be given as well to the solitary, as to the foole. And whosoever shall marke these reasons, and specially the Etymologie of this worde Homo, which in the Greeke tongue as some learned writers thinke signifieth (together)

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

shall perceive, that a man can not be a right man without THE FIRST
Conversation. For he that useth not company hath no BOOKE
experience, he that hath no experience, hath no judgement,
and hee that hath no judgement, is no better then a beast.

GUAZ. I think the Northeast winde doeth not so drive
in sunder the cloudes in the skie, as you, clearing altogether
my minde, have nowe driven away the mystes which dimmed
it, and made it so wandring and running, for the love it
had to solitarinesse. I perceive the conclusion of your
gentle discourse seemeth to be, that solitarinesse ought
to be taken altogether out of the world, and company and
conversation to be chosen, as wel for the health of the minde
as the body. And yet for all that, I see not how that may
be granted unto you, for that there are some times wherin
solitarinesse is not only availeable, but necessary, both to
the inward and outward welfare and prosperous state of
life, so that I thinke it meet to make some mention hereof.

ANNIB. Doe you not remember that I told you at the
beginning of our talke, that to make evident the matter
which hangeth doubtful betweene us, and to resolve our
selves thorowly of it, we must come to distinguish of solitari-
nesse and Conversation?

GUAZ. It is very true.

ANNIB. It is for that I would tel you now, that hence-
forward it was time to leave our generall discourse, and come
to the particularities which we have already proposed, that
there may no confusion remain between us. I then con-
fesse unto you, that solitarinesse is not altogether to be
blamed or banished, and that it is at some time (as you say)
profitable and necessary. And therefore we must first
understande, that a man sometime hath company being
by himself and in solitarinesse, and sometime is solitary
being in company or Conversation.

GUAZ. Pardon me if I interrupt you, these speeches and
distinctions seeme to me to be riddles, therefore you must
serve me in steed of Aedipus, to read them.

ANNIB. I wil explaine them to you, and first I say, there
is one sort of solitarinesse so rare and perfect, that it is

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE always without company and conversation, not at certain times : * whereinto it pleaseth some devout men to enter, where being dead altogether to the world, chosing the best part and living alone (if they may be said to be alone which be with God) they ende their daies most pleasantly, in a life most unpleasant.* And this can no man attain unto, without the special gift of God, and who that otherwise hazardeth to enter into it, exposeth him selfe to a great danger touching his own safegard, and hath no respect to this sentence, Wo be to the lone man, who when he shalbe fallen downe, shall have none to helpe him up. I will make no larger speech of this high kind of solitarinesse, referring my selfe to the long discourses which the divines make of it, but descending to that lesse perfect solitarinesse, which is deprived of Conversation but for a certaine time. I finde therof three kindes, to wit, solitarinesse of time, of place, and of the minde. Solitarinesse of time, is the stilnesse of the night, or the instant wherein one speaketh alone in the presence of many : and this solitarinesse is (as you may judge) no les profitable then necessarie to al sorts of persons, by reason of the things which are learned by word of mouth, as well of readers as of Preachers, and it is (as I saide before) of greater force and efficacy then the bookes and writings of Authours. Next, solitarinesse of place, is the chamber or privat dwelling which everie one chooseth of purpose to sequester him selfe from the companie and conversation of others. Here we have to consider that men settle themselves in this solitarinesse of place for divers respects, some to the intent to raise their thoughts from worldly vanities to the contemplation of God and his wonderful workes, to the ende to joyne themselves to him with incredible joy and health of soule, * and to comprehend that in minde which they cannot see with eye : * some to get with studie and speculation the fruit of learning, some to discourse with them selves publike or private affaires. Al these solitarinesses of place taken and used in due season, have great force to stir up the spirits, and to prepare them a more easie and sure addresse to the works and actions

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

belonging to conversation. * And if we consider diligently **THE FIRST**
the fable of Prometheus, Jupiters Ambassador upon the **BOOKE**
Mount Caucasus, and his heart torne by the Egle, we shall
finde that by the Mount is figured unto us solitarinesse,
and by the Egle contemplation, which woundeth the heart,
and preyeth upon it. Neither is any thing els ment by the
conjunction of the Moone with Endymion, but that he
spent many nights in the contemplation of heavenly things,
whereby he gathered the fruite of Astrologie. And the
shoulders of Atlas wherewith he staied up heaven, repre-
sent unto us nothing els but the knowledge which he had
of the superiour world by meanes of contemplation : * but
these same notwithstanding they are solitary in respect of
the place where they remain alone, yet they are in company
in respect of the diversitie of things which they ponder in
their minde. And therupon Scipio said, that he was never
lesse alone, then when he was alone, for that being gotten
by him self into some solitarie place, he discoursed many
thinges in his minde, pertaining to the increase of his
honour. But I must tell you, that as this solitarinesse is
profitable and necessarie for the disposition of the minde,
so verie often is it hurtfull to the health of the bodie : and
it is therefore I tolde you at the beginning of our talke,
that you ought to avoyde it. For the finer wit a man is of,
the more he beateth it (being alone) about nice and intri-
cate pointes, whereby his bodie may bee brought into
divers dangerous diseases. Neither for all this will I
affirme that this solitarinesse of place is chosen of all, to
bestow them selves in laudable studies, and commendable
speculations, for that there are some who having in their
handes all day long bookes full of naughtinesse and leude
examples, roote and inure them selves in this doctrine, and
make an ordinarie practise of it : insomuch that these ill
disposed persons may well say that they have learned more
naughtinesse beeing by them selves, then they should have
done beeing alwayes in companie in publike and frequented
places : but God bee praysed, and the providence of our
auncestours, who have justly condemned to the fire, all

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST such workes, so soone as they are published, as instruments
BOOKE to all leaude and naughtie purposes. I must also tel you,
that there are some choose solitarinesse through lazinesse
of minde, and lazinesse of bodie, to the intent to rid their
handes of the travelles, affaires, and woorkes whiche they
ought to undertake for their owne behoofe and other
mens. And these lurke loytringly plunged in delicacies,
wherein they conserve themselves, not as Muske in a boxe,
but as Swine in the mire. So that it may bee saide, that
their soule is given to their bodie in stead of salt, least they
should smell. I have knowne some of these idle merchauntes
to withdrawe them selves from companie most parte of the
day, taking pleasure to doe nothing, unlesse it were to
presse downe their beds with the peise of their unwildie
bodies : and yet (such is their impudencie) they will make
men beleeve that they have employed all the time in reading
some good thing or other. I never beholde these fellowes,
but that I excuse and holde well with the Emperour
Domitian, who taking delight to thrust thorowe flies with
the point of his dagger, did at least some exercise, and liked
better to take paines to kil flies, then to suffer his minde
to be corrupted with idlenesse. And if notwithstanding
hee were to be blamed for this, it was not so much for
the trifling exercise, as for that he left undon weightie
matters agreeable to his greatnesse, and availeable to the
conservation of his Empire. * And heereof we have to
conclude, that even as he which abandoneth the active
life, to embrace the contemplative, meriteth praise : so he,
which being in the active life refuseth companie, not upon
any honest occasion, but either for the hate he beareth to
men, either through lazy slouthfulnesse, either through
distrust in him selfe, or for some other defect, shrinketh
aside into solitarinesse, is greatly to be reprehended.* But
there is enough said touching solitarinesse of place, it
remayneth nowe to speake of solitarinesse of minde, which
is, when one is present in person amongst many others, and
yet is absent in minde and thought. Like as a Philosopher
was, to whom a babbling foole, after a long and wearisome

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

discourse, saide, Sir, perchaunce I trouble you with to **THE FIRST**
much talke : no verily, not a whit (saith he) for that I **BOOKE**
gave no eare to you.

GUAZ. I know in deede many which have the skil with the eyes, countenance, gesture, and other outward signes, to make men think they are verie attentive to their talke, and yet have their mindes turned an other way, so that in one instant, they are both present and absent, contenting both them selves and other.

ANNIB. Albeit this discretion is common to many good wits, yet I remember that it is specially attributed to Madame Marguerite Stanga, and that this solitarinesse hath bene figured foorth by a pleasant witted Gentleman in her person, who for the majestie of her lookes, for the excellencie of her grace, bewtie, vertue, behaviour, and manners, is beheld of other dames of this Citie, if not with envy, at least with admiration. And although in company she sheweth her self to be present with countenance, laughing and speaking, yet by the outward shyning of her eyes, bewraying her inward affection (as it were by shining of the cristal which sheweth forth whatsoever is contained in it) it is seene that her gallant mind separated from mortal things, remaineth inclosed in her self, to the intent to exercise her selfe in more worthy and commendable cogitations : taking from the world al occasion of conceiving any hope to win her to vanity, and upon that occasion the gentleman aforesaid deviseth of her these verses folowing :

While that these cheereful eyes
fed on the wished sight,
Of your faire sweete and heavenly face,
Behold my heavy spright
Soone sawe your thoughts to swarve
from myne, whereby I say,
At once you give my eyes great life
and quyte my heart doe slay.

But returning to the solitarinesse of the mind, I woulde have a wise man enter into it when he is in the company of

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST the evil : from hearing whose talke hee ought to stop his
BOOKE eares, as Ulisses did against the song of the Marmaites
* and to walke amongst them (as the saying is) shood
amongest the thornes.* And as wee let not to take a
journey for a little raine or snowe, but make provision so
well as wee may for apparell to defende us against the ill
weather, so wee must not foreflow the pilgrimage of the
ordinary life, for the hinderance of the naughty, but arme
our selves with an invincible minde against the evill dis-
positions of other, whertoo wee ought not any thing at all
to yeele. And for that I tolde you I woulde make mention
likewise of Diogenes, I will declare unto you the witty
answeres which hee made touching this purpose : amongst
others, as one reprooved him for that hee used the companie
of lewde and naughtie persons: The Sunne (sayth hee)
shyneth and spreadeth its beames on uncleane places, and
yet never defileth it selfe. And as another reproched him
for the like, hee answered, The Phisitions are all day with
the sicke, and yet are not infected : and in trueth ill con-
ditions take no holde of an honest minde, and a vertuous
man waxeth not woorse for being in companie with the
wicked * who have no power over him. For that in vaine
(as the Proverb sayth) The net is pitcht in the sight of the
birdes * in so much that beeing amongst them, he maketh
account he is not there, according to the saying of the
Gentleman, to whom as Esope telleth, being in his studie,
there came a countrie fellow, who asked him how he could
live so alone ? To whom hee answered, I began to be alone,
but even since your comming hither : Meaning to shewe
that a learned man is then alone, when he is amongst the
ignoraunt, from whom hee is devided in minde. But it is
nowe time to leave speaking of this matter, for that you
understand what manner of solitarinesse is profitable and
necessary, and in what manner it is sometimes to be used
in companie.

GUAZ. I am satisfied in that point, but I woulde gladly
have you bring to a perfect ende this imperfect discourse :
for it is not yough to have made me know that conversation

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

is profitable, if you goe not farther, and shewe me what THE FIRST
kinde of conversation is necessary for the obtaining of those BOOKE
commodities you have rehearsed.

ANNIB. You say very true, but neverthelesse when we
shal have spoken of the nature and qualitie of conversation,
yet our discourses, being linked together, shal not be
thereby finished, for we must entreate afterwarde of the
generall pointes which all men ought to observe in con-
versation. And that being done, yet shal not the work
be finished, for as wee apply not one medicine to all griefes
of the eyes, so wee must not use conversation with every one
in one selfe sorte: And therefore wee must afterwarde
handle the particuler kindes which pertain to all sortes
of people.

Wherfore if you will have mee distinguish peecemeale,
the plant, the stemme, the boughes, the leaves, the blos-
somes, and the fruites, from the rootes of this tree, I leave
to your consideration if this may bee doone in one day.

GUAZ. For that this is a profitable and pleasant matter,
I beseech you that in these three dayes which I have to
stay heere with you, wee may imploy heerein that little
leasure which shalbe left you from practising on your
patients: and that you will shewe unto me all those
things which belong to conversation, to the ende, that
comming in company with any, of what calling and condi-
tion soever, I may bee sure to omit nothing which I ought
to perfourme.

ANNIB. I cannot thoroughly satisfie your desire, for
many causes: and first, for that to searche out all the
particuler points of conversation, were a matter, if not
impossible, yet at least that would require manie monethes
worke: besides, we must consider that (as the Philosophers
say) there can be no certaine and determinate science, from
particular to particular. Then the particularities of con-
versation being knowne for the most part to men of meane
understanding, I should do you wrong, and should thinke
my self to speake superfluously (yea, even when I should
speak to those ignorant and unskilfull fellowes) if I should

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST intreate of things so ordinarie and common. And there-
BOOKE fore it shal suffice us to intreate of those things which are
principally required in conversation, wherewith perchance
we shall have occasion to mingle and joyne so manie other
bymatters, that I doubt not but you shall rest satisfied.

GUAZ. Verily, I see by this time that as well for the
diversitie of matters which occurre in conversation, as for
the difference of the life and manners of men, with whom
we are conversant, you shall take upon you a travell and
charge farre greater than the twelve labors of Hercules,
thoroughly to intreate of it. For considering that people
differ one from another in degree, in age, in kinde, in life,
in maners, and in profession, it were a hard and tedious
peece of worke to set downe fully and absolutely the proper
dueties of every one of these, and of whosoever shall fre-
quent their companie. And I am of opinion, that when
one shall have prescribed a certaine fourme of conversation
to all these, yet hee shal not then have doone, for that
there must bee respect had not onely to the difference
which is betweene one kind and another, but to that also
which is betweene persons of one onely kinde: for not
onely young men differ in behaviour from olde, and Gentle-
men from Yomen: but even young men amongst them-
selves differ, as also one olde man differeth in behaviour
from another olde man, and one Gentleman from another
Gentleman.

ANNIB. Seeing that these differences fall out in all
kinds, I will briefly set foorth certaine generall and most
needefull meanes, whereby all of them may bee reduced to
one law: Touching the fourme afterward required in con-
versation, with persons different in state and condition,
whom wee have alreadie named, to the end you bee not
deceived, you shal understand, my meaning is not to dis-
course formally of their duetie, neither to lay before you
all those morall vertues which pertaine to the perfection
and happy state of life.

GUAZ. Why deferre you to speake of a matter so
profitable?

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. Two speciall causes withholde mee: the one, THE FIRST
for that I know that not onely the Greekes and Latines, BOOKE
but also all other nations have filled the worlde with divers
volumes full of precepts of Philosophie.

GUAZ. The more bookes of Philosophie we have at this
day, the fewer Philosophers we have: but tell me if it
please you, the other cause.

ANNIB. The other is, that if I should make a ful and per-
fect discourse of Morall Philosophie, it would stande none
in steede, but such as are of deep understanding, as you
are, but minding to speake in particular, of the manners of
conversation meete for all sortes of people, it behoveth mee
to have an eye to the common profite, weighing that the
most parte of men, is not only destitute of intellectuall
and morall vertues, but besides, is neither in wit apte, nor
in wil desirous to receive them, so that it were a vaine
thing (that I may not say foolishe) to goe about to teache
by Art, and in proper tearmes, the foresaide vertues to
such kinde of people.

GUAZ. I holde well with that you have saide, and for
that perchance the time approacheth, that you are to visite
your patientes, it shall doe well heere to make a pause,
and to morrowe if it please you, wee will take againe our
matter in hand, either heere, or at your house at your
choice.

ANNIB. If it shal not trouble you, I can stay heere with
you a little while longer, and we can choose no fitter place
for our purpose then this same, which with the goodly
sight of diverse pleasant pictures (wherwith it is adorned)
doth mervellously recreate our mindes, and ministreth
occasion of witty talke.

GUAZ. Goe forward (I pray you) hardlyly so farre as it
shall please you, for I assure you I never hearde more
delightful harmonie then this same.

ANNIB. For so much then as your question was what
manner of conversation is necessarie for the attaining of that
perfection which we have spoken of, I set a part al other
sorts, and propose for this purpose the civile conversation.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

GUAZ. What meane you by that woord, Civile?

ANNIB. If you meane to know my meaning of it, I must first aske if you know * any citizen which liveth uncivilly?

GUAZ. Yes mary doe I, more then one.

ANNIB. Now let me aske you on the contrarie, if you know any man of the countrey which liveth civilly.

GUAZ. Yea very many.*

ANNIB. You see then, that we give a large sense and signification to this woorde (civile) for that we would have understoode, that to live civilly, is not sayde in respect of the citie, but of the quallities of the minde: so I understand civile conversation not having relation to the citie, but consideration to the maners and conditions which make it civile. And as lawes and civile ordinances are distributed not onely to cities, but to villages, castles, and people subject unto them, so I will that civile conversation appertaine not onely to men inhabiting cities, but to all sortes of persons of what place, or of what calling soever they are.

Too bee shorte, my meaning is, that civile conversation is an honest commendable and vertuous kinde of living in the world.

GUAZ. I know by this your exposition of this woorde (Civile) the felde we have to enter into, is very wide and roomesome, and therefore I am ready to give eare to matters no lesse full of varietie and newenesse, then commoditie and pleasantnesse.

ANNIB. As Marriners, before all other things, learne to know the signes and tokens of windes and stormes, and the sight and place of rockes and shelves, and al other things any way contrarie or hindersome to navigation, to the ende that foreseeing the imminent dangers, they may know how to avoide them, and to make choice of fit times and places prosperously to sayle in: so we, being desirous to understand thorowly which is the civile conversation, to the intent to follow it, must principally seeke to knowe which is the uncivile and blameful conversation, to the intent to flee it. And truly wee ought to avoyde yll

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST
BOOKE

companie, as well for the hurt which is received thereby, by the infection of naughtie conditions, as for the judgement and opinion of others: for that wee are at length taken for such as those are with whom we keepe companie. Which this common Proverb sheweth, Tel me with whom thou doest goe, and I shall know what thou doest. And it is not long since that maister Frauncis Pugiella our Aca-demike (being no lesse skilled in the lawes, then pleasant in companie) tolde me that a famous doctour of his profession, set it downe as an undoubted sentence, that much credit ought to be given to the deposition of a witnesse which giveth in evidence of a mans honestie or dishonesty, for that he hath seene him frequent the companie of men of a good or yll name. Now I woulde not have you blame me, if in searching out which is yll companie, I make heere a certaine distinction of men according to mine owne fansie, not according to the common and ordinarie distinction. For I consider the nature of man one way in respect of him selfe, and an other way in respect of the conversation he hath with others? having then onely regarde to conversation, I ordeine three sortes of men, to whom we will give for the present these names, Good, Evill, and Indifferent, until we meete with woordes more proper and more significant.

GUAZ. Why doe you thinke those tearmes not proper ynough?

ANNIB. For that these two names, Good, and Indifferent serve not to expresse fully that sorte of men whiche I meane: and to shewe it you more plainely, I wil give you an instance of healthy men, which are properly those, who have the foure humours so equally tempered in them, and the simple partes which come of them (besides the other partes which wee call compounde, or instrumentall, whiche are the very members of the body) so wel proportioned, that one thing excede not another in its just measure: and this health is graunted either never, or very seldome, and that to a fewe persons. But for all that, wee commonly tearme those healthfull, who though they bee not of so perfect a

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST constitution of body, are able to live, yea, and to labour
BOOKE too, the most part of their time, without any going to
Phisicke : and (to bee short) who holde more of the whole
then of the sicke. So likewise when I name the good, I
meane not onely that excellencie of goodnesse, which is not
any way imperfect, and which is in a manner as rare on
earth as the Phoenix : but I include in that number, all
those which are well reported and reputed of in the world,
and which approach so neare as they can to that excellencie
before spoken of. In like case, when I saide indifferent,
I meant not that they are halfe good, and halfe evill,
* neither as a certaine Historian taketh it, who speaking
of the Emperour Galba, tearmeth his disposition indifferent,
for that comparing his vertues and his vices together, it
was hard to judge whether he were to bee counted amongst
the good or the naughtie : * but I meant those, who though
sprinckled with some imperfections, yet wrie rather to the
good, then the evill.

GUAZ. I see well now that these names doe not wholly
expresse your meaning.

ANNIB. It may bee that in discoursing wee shall hit
upon more fit tearmes. In the meane while I say, that wee
must alwaies followe the good, flie the yll, and neither
followe nor flie the indifferent, and were it not that I
were afraide to breake the head of your Boccace, I would
call the Good desireable, and the Ill, intollerable, and the
Indifferent, tollerable.

GUAZ. You shall offende Boccace rather with the un
propernes, then with the unusualnes of words. And for
my part, I like better of these same then of the first : where-
by I finde verified the Proverbe, That the second thoughtes
are ever the best : Goe forwarde nowe if it please you.

ANNIB. I take the Intollerable and Ill, for those who
for their apparent faultes are pointed at with the finger,
and holden for infamous, whose companie wee ought alto-
gether to eschew. For al the world cannot let, but that
the world wil judge those which haunt their companie to
be like unto them.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

GUAZ. The abuse of the world is such, that many horrible THE FIRST
vices, are become familiar and common, insomuch that it is BOOKE
counted a fault not to have them, and not to know how to
practise them. And therefore I am of opinion, that if wee
must forgoe the company of the yll, wee shall have but a
few left to deale withall : insomuch that wee shoulde bee
faine to change conversation into solitarinesse, and to
discende to particularities. You know how greivous the
offences are committed against God, by the meanes of
blasphemous othes, which at this day are growne to suche
abuse, that there are few or none which confirme not their
sayings with these wicked and detestable swearings, and
which thinke not therby to bewtifie and set foorth their
speech, as an Oration is with figures. Neither am I able to
report unto you in what maner a young Gentleman a friende
of mine was mocked in the Court, for that in his greatest
chafe, hee alwaies swore by the body of a Hen. And at
the end, to the end he might bee taken for a good Courtier,
he was driven to leave the Hen, and to betake himselfe to
the Saints. That which I say of swering, I meane likewise
of many other haynous faults, which at this day are to be
found in the most part of men. And for that they are
common, I feare me, it be to no purpose that you have
prescribed to avoid the company of the naughtie, seeing
that (if I may say it) Of one selfe pitch, we all have a
touch : And that those which in shew seeme innocent
lambes, are in deede ravening Wolves, and worse then
those who are counted most wicked. For even infidels, and
those that beleve not at all in Christe, will counterfeite
holinesse.

ANNIB. * We are in deede become more weake in vertue,
and more strong in vice, then our predecessours were,*
and I see by you, you have read the sentence of the Poet
Horace, which saith :

From Grandsiers scarce good, our fathers descended,
to commit evill, are readily intended :
In us their sonnes more mischief doeth dwell,
but us, our sonnes in vice will excell.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST And therefore I marvell not, if where as in old time there
BOOKE were few found to blaspheme the name of the great God, at this day there are many which will not sticke to teare him limme meale, insomuch that he is thought either a Sot, or one of a base minde which cannot sweare lustily. But if yee aske mee why these same are suffered in all companies, notwithstanding they are farre worse and farre more worthie of punishment then the other of evill life, I wil say unto you, that it commeth to passe, for that we make no reconing of the offences doone to Godwarde, as a thing which toucheth us not, and which pertaineth to God alone to revenge. But we cannot bee quiet when either wee our selves or our friends are injured either in worde or deede, so that therein wee esteeme the creature above the Creator. For you shall see him speake yll openly, and with a lowd voice, of the name of God, who dareth not in a corner (as also it is not his part) so much as open his mouth to reprove the Prince or the Magistrates.

GUAZ. I thinke these same offend as much, and commit no lesse ryot, then those which crucified Christe.

ANNIB. I thinke rather they offende more, for those thought they did well, otherwise they had kept them selves from doing it, but these same knowe they doe ill, and yet desist not from it: and you knowe howe much more haynous those faultes are which are committed of set malice, then those which are doone of blinde ignorance.

GUAZ. Dispatch I pray you to shew mee if wee ought to flie the conversation of these same, and if you put them in the number of the intollerable.

ANNIB. These horrible swearers, which make a profession of it, when their blood is not stirred, for their pleasure, rather then mooved with choller, or any other occasion, ought in my judgement to bee filed on the roule of the intollerable: but for others, though as a Christian you ought to flie them, yet as a Courtier, you cannot keep you from them: not so much for the great number of them, as for the error of the world, which esteemeth them in the rowe of the tollerable. To be short, wee ought to consider

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

that our name dependeth of the general opinions, which **THE FIRST**
have such force, that reason is of no force against **BOOKE**
them: and therefore wee must avoide those which beare
a marke in their forehead, and are openly knowne to bee
dishonest.

GUAZ. What will you say if I haunt the companie of such,
as a Phisition to cure their infirmities, and as one gealous
of their behaviour?

ANNIB. If you shall think your selfe able to bring them
into a better way, you shall do a deede acceptable unto God,
and the worlde, to use their companie. * Mary, hee that
coveteth to reape commoditie of conversation, must seeke
all that hee may to bee amongst those that either may bee
made better by him, or else may make him better: * but
these of whom I speake have made a sacrifice of their
soules unto the Divell, and have cast of all care of honour,
and of other mens opinions of them: and are so farre gone,
that you wil rather become a convert then a converter: but
herein you must imitate the good Archers, who shoote
not at every birde, but only at those that are within reache
to bee hit.

GUAZ. What men doe you meane to bee those which
cary a marke in their forehead, and are intollerable?

ANNIB. Those who for notable cause are hated of the
worlde, as some for suspition of heresie, some for theft,
some for usurie, and other for other misdeedes, to whom
wee must adde ruffians, harlots, flatterers, dicers, cooseners,
and such, who for the basenesse of their condition, and
trade of their life, are holden for infamous, * as Sergeants,
Hangmen, Tormentours.* Besides such as differ from us
in religion as Jewes, Turkes, etc. And to bee short, all
those which have an evill report, and who oftentimes for
their desertes are newe christened, and have suche reproch-
full names given them, that most men eschew their com-
pany as an infectious disease, * and thinke it a great shame
to bee seene among them.*

GUAZ. But howe shall I behave my selfe with some,
whom I knowe farre more wicked then those whom you

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST have spoken of, albeit by their dissembling hypocrisie,
BOOKE they are accounted of every man for honest men?

ANNIB. It is a common saying, That he which is evill and taken to bee good, may doe muche mischief, and no man thinke him to bee the worker of it. Notwithstanding, I put these same in the number of the tollerable: for though it trouble your conscience to come in their companie, yet you give no occasion of mislike to the worlde, for that they are not reputed evill, and in this point wee ought to satisfie rather others then our selves, and to give place to the common custome.

GUAZ. Doubtlesse custome is a great Tyrant, and I knowe no reason why it ought to prevaile above reason. And * as the river Po, king of rivers, being over neere unto us, for that there hath beene no resistance made against it, is within this sixe yeeres come so farre forward, and hath wonne so much grounde upon this Citie, that at length it hath broken the walles, and nowe threatneth to overthrow them: so in like maner, the violence of custome, for that wee have too much suffered it, hath at this day in manner vanquished reason, which to bee true if you marke some countries on this side the mountaines, as I did at my returne out of Fraunce, you shall finde them false to a life more free (that I may not say licencious) then hath been used heeretofore: and you see throughout the townes, some of those which are taken for Gentlemen to spende the time openly in the market place, in carding, and dicing so freely, as men use to doe in their private houses.

ANNIB. You tell mee no strange thing, neither ought you more to marvell to see those same play at those games openly in the streete, then to see the Frenchmen (as I have hearde they doe) quaffe and carouse in Tavernes, and I am perswaded that if some Gentleman more precise then other shall withdraw himself from this maner of play, not vouchsafing to make one amongst them, hee shalbe mocked and termed disdainful, either a wise man,^y or Doctour, or a Poet, or some such like. But withall I woulde you shoulde knowe that this newe manner of life hath in it some colour

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

and excuse, for that those Countries of Piemont, which THE FIRST
you speake of having been for these many yeeres, a con- BOOKE
tinuall receite for souldiers of many nations, the people
are not only become warriors, but have retained the customes
and rytes of warre.

GUAZ. Are you then of opinion that a Gentleman ought
to converse with such manner of people?

ANNIB. Upon this point, there present themselves unto
mee two contrarie reasons: For if I respect the common
use of the Countrie, which is nowe become auncient, and
hath taken deepe roote, wee cannot but put them in the
number of the desirable, and wee may boldly use their
company. On the other side, if I set my selfe to consider
that this gamesome life is offensive, and of evill example,
and that in all other Countries the Gentlemen, and those
which are well borne, woulde count it a shame to bee founde
in publike places with cardes in their handes, some per-
chance woulde place them in the ranke of the intollerable.
Notwithstanding, betweene these twoo extreeme reasons,
I see one in the middest betweene them, which maketh mee
of opinion that these men are to bee counted tollerable,
for that though they have by use this abuse of playing, yet
you shall finde that they apply it not to that ende, which
other gamesters doe, to make a gaine of it, but for paste-
time and recreation sake: and besides wee knowe that for
the rest of their life, they are so modest and vertuous as
any other people are. And therefore I thinke, that that
custome of playing beeing judged of the worlde neither
good nor evill, these men which use it are not to be rejected
out of honest companie.

GUAZ. In my opinion this is a kinde of injustice, to
allowe that to these which is inhibited to others: and to
give them power to make of vice vertue. Your meaning is
then, as farre as I gather, that as it is lawfull onely for
the Cinganes to robbe, so these also have priviledge to
play in open streete. But I woulde have them thinke that
the streetes and publike places ought to serve the common
people for merchandise, and the Gentlemen for justes,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST turnies, shewes, and such like exercises, which appertaine
BOOKE more to good horsemanship and warlike discipline, then
cardes and dice doe. And therefore I am perswaded they
have nothing else to say, for defence of this their custome,
but that which Diogenes said, who beeing asked why hee
eate openly in the streete, answered because hee was a
hungred in the streete : so they play there, because being
there, there commeth upon them a desire to play.

ANNIB. There is no helpe in it, but you must settle your
selfe to like of such men with their imperfections, and to
thinke that every Nation, land, and Countrie, by the nature
of the place, the climate of the heaven, and the influence of
the starres hath certaine vertues, and certaine vices, which
are proper, naturall, and perpetuall unto it. And as
good and sharpe wittes flourishe where the ayre is pure and
subtill, so there are founde dull and grosse heads where
the ayre is foggie and thicke. And touching conditions
you knowe that the Greekes though singular in learning
and eloquence, yet are they disloyal and faythles, and there-
fore it is proverbially saide, The Greekish fayth. More-
over, there are other people who by naturall vertue are given
to the industrie and discipline of warre, and by natural
vice are driven to haughtinesse and drunkennesse, some
are able easily to sustaine and stoutly to beare out paine,
watching and travaile, who on the other side are vain-
glorious and braggers. To some, stout hardinesse, and
devout holinesse, have been alwayes proper and natural,
who neverthelesse are worldlings and unconstant. I am
sure also you make no doubt of it, but that we Italians
have likewise some vices and vertues natural, and that
wee doe no lesse exceede in the one, then excell in the other.
But if it seeme no marvaile unto you to see these divers
fashions and customes, according to the diversitie * and
great distance of Countries, doe but consider howe much
wee differ onely within the circuite of Italy, in the Romane,
Tuscane, Lombardie, and other partes of it : then behold
one of those partes apart, and cast your imagination on the
centre or point of Montferrat, and you shall finde, howe

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST
BOOKE

only the river Po and Tanar make Countries to differ in language, apparell, life, and manners, which are no further distant one from another, then from one side or banke of the river to the other. Whereuppon you will graunt me, that all Countries have their naturall faults together with their vertues : wherby you may bee assured, that if other people have not used to play at cardes and dice openly, yet perchaunce they have brought in use both publikely and privately vices farre more pernicious then this. Now to lose no more time about this point, I say unto you, that it is not inconvenient, but necessary, to folow the diversitie of manners and customes, according to the diversitie of the Countries, * and to imitate Alcibiades, to whom it was counted a praise, that hee had so readie a wit to frame himselfe to the diversitie of the life and manners of other Countries,* and according to the saying, When one is at Rome, to live as they doe at Rome.

GUAZ. I shoulde thinke good that wee shoulde nowe come to the generall points pertaining to the conversation of the tollerable.

ANNIB. It is better in my mind to dispatch other things which now come in my head touching the intollerable. And though this matter be so ample, that a man cannot sufficiently speake of it, yet wee ought not with scilence to passe over the vice of the slaunderous, who with the falsenesse of their tongues, seeke to blemishe the brightness of others names.

GUAZ. That fault is at this day common throughout the worlde, and therefore wee must spite of our teeth beare with ill tongues, which swarme in greater number then Bees doe in July : neither is it possible for a man to escape their stinging, do the best hee can. For now adaies men take such pleasure in this vice, that many which are free almost from all other faults, yet are they not able to bridle their blasphemous tongues.

ANNIB. * I have by long experience noted, that commonly the idle, the ignorant, the unfortunate, and bankrupts, which have no good successe in their own affaires, are they

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST which seeke to deprave the doinges of other men, and give
BOOKE themselves to speake evill, for that they know not how to
doe any thing well.* But though this fault be common
to many, and grateful to the world, yet for al that it is
hatefull to the worlde : and whosoever shall looke throughly
into it, will graunt mee that the fault of him which speaketh
yll of his neighbour, to the intent to bring him into hatred,
is greater then of him who pulleth the bread out of the
mouth of the poore. For as the soule is more precious then
the body, so is it a greater offence to take away ones good
name, which refresheth the soule, then to defraud one of
food, which sustaineth the body.

GUAZ. It seemeth to mee that in these wordes is implied
some contrarietie, where you say, that to speake yll of
others, is both gratefull to the worlde, and hatefull to the
worlde.

ANNIB. No truely, for our nature draweth us to desire
to understand the imperfections of other, and wee count it
the greatest pleasure that may bee : and as we like well to
heare others yll spoken of, so wee cannot abide to bee ill
spoken of our selves, whether it be rightfully or wrongfully.

GUAZ. I count it nothing strange, that wee like not
to bee founde fault withall our selves : but what thinke
you is the cause that wee are so glad to heare others yll
spoken of ?

ANNIB. I thinke that commeth to passe by meanes of
two mightie enimies, which wee keepe in our owne house,
that is, Envie, and Ambition, which in our selves, conspir-
ing against our selves, force us to bee greeved that others
shoulde bee counted good, and make us desire that only
wee our selves may seeme good. But I will tell you a thing
which will make you marvell in deede, and which you will
thinke against all reason.

GUAZ. What is that I pray you ?

ANNIB. Mary that there are two principall sortes of
these evill tongued : the one yll, which you ought to flie :
the other farre worse, whose companie you ought not to
avoi'de. I meane by Ill, those who without feare, without

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST
BOOKE

shame, without any respect or difference, whet their tongues to rent a sunder, and impaire in all their talke both publike and private, the good name of others, sparing none, either present or absent. But these same, while they recount other mens faultes, doe many times more offende the mindes of the hearers, then those who doe commit them. And though they have a marke on their forehead, and are knowne for infamous persons, yet for so much as they utter their venome openly and flatly, they ought, in respect of the worser sort, rather to bee pitied then blamed : for that they shew plainly, that their evill speaking is derived from their owne corrupt nature, not from the parties of whom they speake yll : By reason whereof, their wordes are not much credited, and in my opinion they doe nothing els but raise a dust to doe out their owne eyes : for in accusing others, they condemne themselves, and where they woulde have men thinke them to bee Catoes, they shewe themselves Momes, Beastes, and not to bee borne withall. But what shall wee say of those Curre dogges, which without barking bite us privily : who must bee admitted into conversation, notwithstanding they are farre worse then the other.

GUAZ. Which do you take them to bee ?

ANNIB. Those are of divers sortes, who neverthesse shoote all at one marke. Some of them I call Maskers, some Rethoricians, some Poets, some Hypocrites, some Scorpions, some Traitours, some Forgers, some Biters, some Mockers, and some unknowne.

GUAZ. You make mee laugh with your pleasant and strange distinctions : but whom call you maskers ?

ANNIB. There are certaine glorious fellowes, who at shrovetide goe with maskes on their face, and yet woulde faine be knowne what they are : so likewise certaine naughty tongued fellowes under the maske of modestie, say they will not name him whom they reprehende, and yet they set him out so evidently, that all the hearers knowe whom hee meaneth. By the example of the Countrieman, who telling the hunter that the Foxe was not gone that

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST way, pointed notwithstanding to the place where hee was
BOOKE hidden. Some of these maskers use also speaches with a
certaine outwarde shewe of commendation, which never-
thelesse are full of reproche and mockerie. And to say
what is of it, they are those who according to the Proverb,
Have Hony in their mouth, and a knife in their hand.

GUAZ. Now who are the Rethoricians ?

ANNIB. They are those who with a certaine figure,
called by the Maisters of Eloquence Occupatio, make as
though they would not speake evill, and yet doe it, and
worse too. And touching this point, no longer agoe then
yesterday I chaunced to bee in companie, where one
amongst the rest complaining of another that had injured
him in words, saith, I will not rehearse the lewde part hee
plaied with a poore maide (whom hee named) neither the
stripes hee caused to bee given one night to another,
neither the contractes of usurie, which hee hath made with
certaine poore men of such a place, which I perfectly knowe,
but I will speake nothing heereof, least men count me to
be as ill tongued as hee. Next after these, come the
blasphemous Poets, who using the figure Antiphrasis, and
speaking by contraries, will give in mockage, the name of
faire to a woman that is foule, and of honest, to one that
is an harlot, and will commend the eyes of one which
looketh a squint. Let us nowe come to ill tongued Hypo-
crites, who under the colour of griefe and compassion, to
be the better beleaved, lamentably rehearse the ill haps
of other : which vice, though it bee common to manie,
yet it is most familiar with certaine women, who meeting
with other of their Gossips, after the first greetings, they
forthwith breake into these speeches, Have you not
hearde the hard hap of my unfortunate neighbour : and
thereupon making the storie, they rehearse howe the hus-
bande by meanes of his servant, tooke her tardie in her
hastie businesse. Then they tell the wall, and the way
whereby her lover got downe : next, how cruelly her hus-
bande beate her, and her maid, and thinke not that they
leave any thing behind untolde, but rather will put too

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST
BOOKE

somewhat of their owne devise. After this, another beginneth to say, And I will quite your tale with the like chaunce that happened within this sixe dayes in our streete, but I pray you in any wise let it go no further. Now I leave to you to thinke how in recounting these goodly novels, they passe from one streete to another, to recite the doings of others.

GUAZ. The last yeere the Dutches was driven to part with one of her chief women, for this very cause: she had continually her houres devoutly in her hands, and was long time taken for a woman of a most godly life, by reason whereof shee was growen into great favour with her highnes: notwithstanding in processe of time shee was detected to be one of a naughty slanderous tongue: wherby she went about to bring into the disgrace of the Dutchesse al the Ladies of the Court. Before shee fell to the matter, shee used some suche insinuation, Madame I woulde not have your grace any whit offended or troubled for any thing that befalleth to your Gentlewomen, for you ought to thinke that we are borne sinners, and that there is nothing in this world more fraile then our fleshe. Consider with your selfe, how much shee inflamed the Dutchesse by these wordes, with desire to understande the rest. And as shee was earnest with her to goe on with her tale, the naughtie queane humbly requested her not to inforce her to speake of suche inconveniences. And after shee had abidden three or foure assaults, at length, as it were forced thereto, rubbing drie her eyes, which for very grieve stood full of teares, shee began to make relation of the slipper pranks of the Dutcheses Gentlewomen, and had never done with her reprochfull reportes. But I expect now your speech of the yll tongued Scorpions.

ANNIB. Those be they which will utter these or suche like speeches of you or any other: I thinke not possible to finde a more curteous and honorable Gentleman then Maister Guazzo, whom I should farre more account of, if he had not one great fault. You knowe howe afterwarde he beginneth in manner of a Scorpion to sting you with

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST his tayle, in speaking yll of you. Others will handle the
BOOKE matter more artificially saying, A mischiefe take those yll
tongues which cease not to molest those which are good
and honest, and will not so much as spare the good name of
our Maister Guazzo, of whom (notwithstanding hee is the
flower of curtesie and vertue) yet they sticke not to say,
that he is proude and malicious, and that corrupted with
money he hath done and saide such and such thinges : and
so tell all and more too.

GUAZ. I understand you. These same may goe hand in
hand with those who alwayes accompany their (yea) with
(but). What say you now of yll tongued traytours ?

ANNIB. If perchaunce you have received some hard
intreatment at your Princes hande, and * as it were to ease
your stomake * you make complaint therof to some one,
uppon trust that you repose in him, and hee goe and dis
cover it to your Prince, wil you not judge him to bee an ill
tongued traytour, and one that seeketh your spoile ?

GUAZ. Yes truly, and yet that fault is rife in Courts,
and oftentimes Princes, being desirous to try out the truth,
have graunted their servants the combate one against the
other. And I knowe when upon like occasion certaine
Gentlemen have convayed themselves into some close
place, where because the one would not live with the name
of an evil speaker, and the other of a false accuser, they
have made an ende of their lives and their quarrels both
together.

ANNIB. I comprehend also under this withered branch,
all talebearers, and al spies, all coyners and sowers of
discord, and al those which bewray other mens secrets :
leaving to your report how greatly they doe offend.

GUAZ. The least punishment that they deserve is, to
have their tongues pulled out, as Jupiter served a certaine
nymph, who bewrayed his secret loves to Juno : but I
marvaile nothing though many fal into this falt, for that
we naturally run upon things which are forbidden us.
Wherupon a certain wise man used to say, that it was more
easie to hold a burning coale, then a secret word in ones

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

mouth. Wherefore I hold him for a very foole, which dis THE FIRST
covereth his secrets to another, if necessitie force him not. BOOKE
For according to the saying, He bringeth him selfe in sub-
jection to another, which telleth his secret to him who
knewe it not. I remember me to this purpose, of a pleasant
part of a serving man, to whom his maister gave certaine
garments: which he no sooner had, but he gave them
forthwith to a friend of his, and as his maister blamed him
for it, hee made answere, why woulde you have mee keepe
them, when you your selfe coulde not keepe them? A
man may shape us the like answere in revealing our secretes,
which we our selves could not keepe hidden in our hearts.
And we ought to hold it for a ground, that things com-
mitted to the eares, are for the most part proclaimed in
the streets. But as it is a great falt to disclose the secrets
of other: so contrariwise, it is a notable vertue to know
how to holde ones peace, and to bridle his tongue. And
if we be bounde to keepe close the secrets of a friend: how
much more ought we secretaries to conceale the secrets of
our maister, who giveth us wages to the end we should be
secret? and that we should imitate the Greeke, who as
one told him his mouth stunke, answered, that the cause
of it was the many secrets which he suffred to mould and
vinew within it. Which may be understood not only of
other mens secretes, but of our own also. And in very
deede he that will keepe his thoughts secret, let him not
unfolde them to any other, but let him be his owne secret-
ary. But me thinkes I am strayed out of our way, and
therefore it were better we returned to the distinction of
the yll tongued.

ANNIB. Naye rather, your briefe and sententious dis-
course came well to the purpose, and I willingly gave eare
to it, as matter not proceeding from a Secretary imployed
in trifles. Let us now speake of yll tongued forgers, whose
naughtinesse is such, that they wil accuse you to have done
or saide that which you never thought. Wherein you
oftentimes receive injury of two persons: to wit, of the
false accuser, who according to the proverb, speketh

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST reprochful words to one that is deafe, which is, to backbite
BOOKE the absent: and of him who before he understand the matter, giveth credit to those false surmises. This questionlesse is an over great fault, and in the number of these forgers I put those, who if you shall speake any thing unto them soberly and sagely, make a false and perverse interpretation of it, and wrest it to some evill meaning. The ill tongued byters follow next, out of whose mouth proceede certaine short nips, which pearce our harts more then sharpe arrowes: And though they quippe and scoffe oftentimes according to the trueth, yet they are not cleare from gilt, for that they doe it with a spyteful mind: where-by they incur blame and ill will: Yea they are so indiscreet and insolent, that they had rather forgoe a faythfull friende, then a scoffing speeche. Neither can they so cover their wordes under the cloake of pleasauntnesse or gravitie, but that their maliciousnesse is dicyphered. But as they are blame worthie, who with such tauntes stir up mens choler, so those are to be borne withall, who being provoked, return one scoffe with an other; and those answeres ever are worth two of those which are made unprovoked. Wherof we have a thousande examples: amongst others, this is knowne to most men, which was made to the Emperour Augustus, who meeting by chaunce with a straunger which resembled him verie much in favour, asked him if his mother had at any time beene at Rome, insinuating thereby in flouting maner, that he might be his fathers bastarde sonne. But the straunger answered him no lesse boldly then merily, my mother was never there, but my father hath.

GUAZ. It is verie true, that he which saieth what pleaseth him, heareth that which displeaseth him.

ANNIB. After these same, come mockers and flouters, who without any comely grace, deride every man, and more easily persuade them selves that they are pleasant and mery conceited fellowes, then perceive them selves to be ignorant and indiscreete fooles.

GUAZ. A Gentleman will hardly away withall, to bee

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

mocked by one of these glorious Asses, neither will he easily digest such an injury. THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. I thinke so, but he must use patience, and folow the Philosopher, who as it was told him that certeine mocked him, answered: It may be they mocke at mee, but I am not mocked. * And no doubt he is greatly deceived, which thinketh it lawfull for him to despise or mocke any, but those which are evil. There remaine nowe the evil tongued unknowne, who worke their feate two manner of wayes, either by writing, or by figure. The first, by slaunderous Lybels impaire the honour of others, and these same for the most part in maner of lightning, which scorcheth the toppes of Towers and high Palaces, cast foorth their renoume against Princes and great Lordes. The other, with tablets and pictures use to represent men and women in some infamous and dishonest act.

GUAZ. I remember that in a famous Citie there was by night set upon the dore of his house, the most natural and resemblant picture of a Gentleman with two hornes on his forehead.

ANNIB. Such deedes are blameable, yea, and deserve punishment rather then blame. * Now you have heard how many sortes there are of the yll tongued in the world, and how grievous their fault is: which is moreover more shamefull when it is committed against the dead, for that the evil speaker sheweth thereby manifestly his base and abject minde, in offending those who can not defende them selves, against whom while they were alive, they durst not perchance once open their lippes. And of these, this saying rose, That the Lion being dead, the verie Hares triumph over him.* But it is nowe high time to set an ende to this discourse, and I feare mee you will counte mee yll tongued, to speake so muche yll of the yll tongued. Wherefore all these kinde of evil speakers gathered together, I say, that though they are had in hatred, yet commonly they are not excluded from the company of others: for that they are not marked on the forehead, by reason wherof

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST we cannot refuse their company, but must away with them
BOOKE so well as we may.

GUAZ. Seeing your minde is not, that we shall flie the Conversation of such manner of pestiferous people, in my opinion it were expedient and necessarie, to teache some trickes how we may be preserved from the venome of their serpentine tongues.

ANNIE. Your request is very reasonable, whereto I briefly answer, saying unto you, That like as certaine beastes, having to incounter with Serpentes, have first recourse to certaine simples, which, being eaten, have power to repress and mortifie their venome: so having often to incounter with the evil tongued, we ought to be armed with some preservative. And for my part, I finde no presenter remedie, when in our presence a foule mouthed railer fileth his toung to touch some one, then to abase our eyes, and not to seeme to take pleasure in his railing speech. For when he perceiveth we delight not in his words, he wil forbear to speake evill. You know that arrowes will not sticke in stones, so neither wil their rotten roots stick fast, but where they find the ground soft and apt to receive them. And I say thus much unto you further, that if wee will seeke diligently which is the greater fault, either to give eare to an evill speaker, or to speake yl of others, we shall confesse in the end, (as others have done) that we are not able to give any determinate judgement of it. And to say the trueth, whosoever giveth hearing to a slaunderous detractor, giveth him occasion to offende: and it is so greate chaunce, but that hee him selfe is one of the same stampe. So that he which speaketh, thinketh he committeth no fault, or at least if he doe, that hee parteth it in the middle, giving one halfe to the hearer, and taking the other unto him selfe. Whereby it commeth to passe, that like two blinde men which leade one an other, they fall both into one ditch. Let us then stoppe our eares, against the woordes of suche manner of people, and so dooing wee shall repress their unbridled tongues, and get great honour and credite with the wise. And as it is well done to beare

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

no part in the yll report of others, so is it a deede deserving **THE FIRST**
commendation, to make no account of the slaunders which **BOOKE**
others rayse of us. And wee ought to prepare our selves
to have our eares as readily at our commaunde, as they
have their tongues. By the example of Alexander the
great, who making warre against an other king, and hearing
one of his souldiers speake yll of him, rebuked him sharply,
saying, I give thee pay to fight against mine enemy, not to
rayle against him. The same Alexander understanding
that some misreported him, went not about any way to
revenge it, but answered sagely, and with a Princely
modestie, that it belonged to a King to doe well, and
heare yll. *Ad heereto, the saying of Augustus, who
hearing that Tiberius was verie sory that hee bare him
selfe so modestly and patiently towardses those that spake
yll of him, wrote unto him these woordes, Doe not
(my Tiberius) heerein followe your youthfull fansie, and
take it in such skorne that there are some which speake
ill of us, for that is sufficient if we be in that case that
none can doe us harme. Also he sayde to another touch-
ing this matter, that in a free citie men ought to have
free speeches.*

GUAZ. But all princes have not the corage of Alexander
or Augustus.

ANNIE. Truly if it be yll done to blemish the renoune
of private persons, it is much woorse to misreport princes
specially our naturall and leige Lordes, and those which doe
it are to be detested of all men, for that in speaking yll of
them, they provoke them to wrath, and oftentimes give
them occasion to alter their conditions, and of gentle and
curteous, to become rough and cruell. Neyther can they
excuse themselves by saying that there are naughtie
princes and tyrantes, for so much as they have received
a commaundement from God to obey their rulers, what
soever they are: in confirmation whereof it is sayde, if
Nero be thy prince rebell not against him.

GUAZ. Now that wee have done with those pricking and
thorny tongues, have you any other sorte of persons which

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST are at least to be borne withall and tollerated in our
BOOKE conversation, though they be not to be desired ?

ANNIB. A certaine Philosopher, being asked what beast in the world he thought to be worst, answered, of wilde ones, the evill tounge, of tame ones, the flatterer : and therefore I thinke we shall proceede in our discourses very orderly, if having spoken already of those wilde beastes, wee shall now intreate of these tame ones, whose breath is so venomous, that it poisoneth the hearts of those that give eare unto them.

GUAZ. And in what row I pray you put you these ?

ANNIB. There are of them two sorts, the one open, the other secret. The open flatterers are those, who constrained through neede and hunger, rather then any thing else, get them to the houses of great personages, and there playe their parte so wel that they make them beleieve, according to the Proverbe, that glorie Wormes are lanternes, and that the Moone is made of a greene Cheese. Or at least they wil be sure to say or doe some thing that shalbe acceptable unto them. And these get the name, not onely of flatterers, but also of Parasites and jesters. Like as one Nicesias, who seeing the flies bit as soone the handes, as soone the face of Alexander, sayd, O how much better are these flies then other, which have the favour to tast of your royall blood. * And another seeing Dionisius (standing a good way off out of his hearing) to laugh with certaine of his familiers, he fel to laughing to : and as Dionisius asked him why he laughed : he answered, For that I know al your woordes to be so ful of wittie pleasantnesse, that they wil make any man laugh.* You see likewise the comedies, both of the time past, and of the present, furnished with these flatterers and Gnathoes, whom for that they have been pointed at, as they goe in the streetes, and openly noted for infamous persons, wee ought too avoide as intollerable, and men of vile condition, and of no valour, and who often like slaves are well and truly beaten for their scurrilous and broad jesting. And as the Ape which is not fit to garde the house as the mastiffe, neither

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

to beare a burden as the Asse or horse, neither to eare the ground as the Oxe, giveth himselfe to make us laugh with his mops and mowes, and to indure a thousand villanies : so these flatterers, having no honest or profitable trade to commend themselves by, frame themselves to delight the eyes and eares of others, to their owne great shame and reproch. Next after these, followe the secret flatterers, who under the colour of friendship and good will, cunningly and artificially insinuate them selves into other mens favour, and by their subtil devises and false perswasions, make them fall into many errorrs.

GUAZ. You put these same as I thinke in the number of the tollerable.

ANNIB. Just.

GUAZ. And I would holde rather that they should be put in the number of the desirable.

ANNIB. Why so ?

GUAZ. For that though all reprove flatterie in woorde, yet everie one commendeth it in heart : and I promise you, that among so many cities, countries, and nations as I have travelled, I never yet found man so fierce and savage which hath not suffered him selfe to be coyed and clawed with the tickling of flatterie : and by long experience, I have noted that all persons of great valour, and of the best wits take a singuler pleasure no lesse to flatter others, then to be flattered them selves. You are not ignorant that if you, minding to extol me, cam and tolde me that I were a strong wrastler, or an excellent musition, I should thinke you mockt mee because no part of those partes are in me, but when you shal commend me for writing a fayre hand, or a pure stile, or for any thing else concerning my profession, I shall for manner and modestie sake make some curtesie to accept your commendation, but in my minde I shalbe well apaide of it : as well for that I perswade my selfe; that all which you shall say of me touching those matters, is most true, as for that naturally I am desirous of praise and commendation. And I remember I have read, that Themistocles beeing after asked what woordes uttered on the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST stage pleased him best, answered, those which recount my
BOOKE prayes. And this desire is common to al men, who are so
licourous of honour * that onely to heare themselves exalted,
maketh them besides them selves for joy. Like as Demos-
thenes did, who passing before two waterbearers and
hearing them say softly one to another, this is the famous
Orator Demosthenes, turned back, and stood a tiptoe to
make himselfe the better seene, as who say, I am even he.
But what speake I of Demosthenes? How many are there *
who without measuring their merit, or considering whether
they be prayesd rightly or without cause, suffer themselves
willingly to be deceived, and take in good part these praises.
* And on the contrarie how many doe we see (and perhaps
I my selfe am one of them) that take it hevily, and in a
manner angerly, if they bee not magnified.* Yea I wil
say more unto you, that if one of these Gnatoes, of whom
you have made mention, should fall to commending mee,
and bend him selfe to set mee foorth in the best colours
hee coulede, undoubtedly I shoulde become a very Thraso,
and I shoulde willingly listen unto him, making my selfe
beleeve, that though hee used to flatter others, yet he dealt
plainly with mee. Yea, I should can him thanke for it,
and wishe that all my friends and kinsfolke were present
to heare it.

Tush Maister Annib. Flatterie is the way to make
friends, and winne preferment: and I am perswaded, that
hee which knoweth not howe to glose and flatter, knoweth
not howe to behave himselfe in companie. I hearde once
a French Lorde say to his friends, flatter mee, and ye doe
me the greatest pleasure in the worlde. * And there is no
man but knoweth, that as bitter reprehension is the begin-
ning of enmitie, so gentle adulation is an entrie to amitie.*
But if you thinke that flatterie doeth often make men do
amisse, I am of the contrarie opinion: for as hee, which is
worthilie commended, is thereby the more encouraged to
goodnesse, so he that seeth himselfe prayesd without
desert, acknowledgeth to himselfe his unwoorthinesse, and
indeavourerth by his deedes to become worthie of such

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

praise. And if flatterie were a fault, discreete fathers and THE FIRST
schoolemaisters would not use it towards yong children, BOOKE
who notwithstanding they do not speake, reade, write,
sing or daunce, or any such like, exactly and perfectly, yet
their fathers or maisters cease not greatly to extol that
which they doe, to the ende to incourage them to goe
forward from good to better. You see also, that nature
hath planted a certaine kinde of fawning flatterie, even in
the hearts of little infants, who runne and imbrace, and
kisse their parents and friends, when they woulde obtaine
any thing at their hands: yea and hath taught it unto
beggars, who to have our almes, importune and flatter us
with faire wordes, and pitiful speeches. Moreover; con-
sider these fine Oratours what glavering speeches they use,
and howe they teach men to insinuate, and by coloured
wordes to creepe into mens boosomes, and to winne the
favour of Princes and Magistrates. Neither wil I omit the
example of politike lovers, who to winne the good will of
their beloved, terme her both in talke and letters, sometime
Mistresse, sometyme the heart of their life, sometime their
soule, sometime their hope, with such like flattering names.
Yea, they will not sticke to sende her to Paradise, giving
her the tytle of a Goddess, and calling her beautie Angeli-
call and divine: her teeth Perles, her lippes Corall, her
hands Ivory, and as the Poet sayth,

Her heires are glistening Golde,
Her face the driven snowe :
Her lids are of Hebene tree,
Her eyes two Starres doe showe.

The worlde (to make it short,) is full of flatterie, and is
maintayned by flatterie, and at this day it is more in fashion
then picked beardes, or great ruffes. You see howe all
persons, to the intent to avoide contention, and to bee
acceptable in companie, sooth one an other, not onely by
speaking, but by holding their peace, and seeming to con-
sent to other mens sayings. In deedes likewise double
diligence is often used, as, though wee see the garmentes

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST of our maister or friend verie cleane without spot or mote,

BOOKE yet to picke us a thanke, wee will not sticke to rubbe and wyepe them with the lappe of our cloake, as if there were dust or durt uppon them. Againe, there are some who whyle others speake, though they give no eare at all unto them, yet they nodde their heads, and abase their eyes, and with signes seeme to holde upp their yeas and nayes, which is nothing else but meere flatterie. You know also that we naturally hate cavillers and Sophists, who at every woorde wil overthwart us, and as they say, seeke knottes in Bulrushes; and howe on the other side those, which seeme to consent to our sayings, eyther in woordes or jesture, wee repute them for our friendes, wee beare them great affection, and love to bee in their company, taking their flatterie in steede of curtesie and good will. In so muche that we count him eyther envious or proude, whiche doeth not sooth us in all thinges: and so greate is our vaine glorie, that when men commende us, though wee thinke it farre above our desert, yet wee attribute it rather to the great abundance of good will, then to the fraude of flatterie. You shall never heare any give the lie to an other for prayses, which hee shall wrongly and falsely slaunder him withall, but being puffed up with pride and vainglorie, with a mery looke, hee maketh answeere, The good will, which you beare mee, causeth you to say so. Therefore not without reason, a certaine Flatterer (being advised to speake the truth) answered in deed, A man ought to speake the trueth to him that will heare it: but who is hee? But neverthesse take this with you, that as trueth getteth hatred, so flatterie winneth love, and breedeth good blood, in so much that hee, which should take flattery out of the worlde, shoulde take away al humanitie and curtesie. For then we should not salute him whom we take to be our enemy, wheras now we see, that he biddeth us good morrowe with his mouth, which wisheth us much sorowe in his heart. But what will you have a man doe? * We must by their example give them mery lookes, and fleer in their faces: we must play the Foxe with Foxes, and

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

delude art, with art.* And as it is a fault stify to stand THE FIRST
in contention with ones friend, so is it a vertue to know BOOKE
how to give place, and yeld in giving him the upper hand.
Like as the wyly Anichin did in Boccace, who suffering a
Gentlewoman to mate him at chests, therby made him selfe
her mate at better sport. * By these reasons therefore I
conclude, that to winne favour, and happily to atchive
our purposes, we must alwaies have praysing and pleasing
wordes in our mouth,* and wee must count it commend-
able to extol both by woords and signes the dooinges of
others, and to give them that which everie one gapeth after.

ANNIB. You have very wittily commended and set foorth
flattery, but for that I am altogether different in opinion
from you, because I will not be thought a Flatterer, I wil
oppose my self against the reasons which you have alleged.
And first I say unto you, that men for the most part, are
Flatterers of themselves, making themselves beleve they
are that, which they are not. * With which folly Princes
are oft times blinded, like as Domitian was, who was
neither afeard nor ashamed to cause him selfe to be called
Lorde and God. Of whom a flatterer writeth these wordes
to his glorie, but to his owne shame, The Edict of our
Lorde and God. Likewise Alexander suffering this mad-
nesse to enter into his head, thought it not enough to be
a man and a king, and to have the title of great : but he
would on Gods name, be called the sonne of Jupiter, neither
was he wel pleased with those which did not sooth him in
it. Whereof his mother complained, saying, Hee woulde
bring her into disgrace with Juno, for making her a Cuc-
queane. But at this divinitie a certaine Philosopher, who
had no skill in flattering, made a scoffe, who seeing his
Phisition in his sicknesse prepare for the recovery of his
health a certaine supping or broth, sayde, Our God hath
put the hope of his health in a messe of broth : so that
those whiche love them selves, so without measure,*
willingly give eare to flatterers, of whom they thinke they
are praysed, when in trueth they are but flattered. And
therefore no mervayle though flatterers are so acceptable

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

Yet notwithstanding, men of discretion, which knowe themselves and their desertes, though naturally they are desirous of prayse, yet they love not to be flattered, or prayed without cause: for so much as false prayse is naught els but mockerie, and therefore I thinke you not so greedie of glorie, that if in the recitall of your prayses I should intermedle any thing which were not true, you would can mee any great thanke for it, but would blame mee either in woordes openly, or in your heart secretly.

GUAZ. See howe you are wounded with your owne weapon, for in commending me for one who like not to bee commended above my deserving, you attribute a vertue unto me which is not in mee, and shewe your selfe a flatterer, and a flouter.

ANNIB. You are deceived, and it is you your selfe that have received the wounde: for having alreadie sayde, that if a flatterer prayse you, you will not take him for a flatterer towards you, and now not allowing me to attribute unto you a vertue, which you deeme your selfe to have, you are contrary to your selfe, and make me appeare a true dealer, and no flatterer. Besides that, when I say, I take you to be such a one that seeketh not prayse without desert, this is no commendation, but rather a good opinion that I have of you: This were a commendation, if I did affirme absolutely that you were suche a one as woulde give no care to flatterers. Wherefore my woordes having no signification of prayse, they can not receive any interpretation or suspition of flatterie. Nowe following our purpose, I say againe, That a wise man doeth never agree to the false prayses of flatterers, who resemble altogether the *Fishe Polypus*: for as that *Fishe* chaungeth colour according to the object that it incountreth, so they alter their opinions according to the appetite of the hearers: and they are termed by an auncient Authour enemylike friendes, for under their pleasaunt sugred woordes, they keepe hidden a bitter venomous meaning, * in like manner as the hooke is hidden under the bayte, or the Serpent amongst the flowers: Neither are they unlike the Butcher who

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

claweth the Hogge with his hande, to the intent to come conveniently to laye his Beetle uppon his pate. Neither is it to bee saide, that flatterie woorketh any good, for that a man commended without cause, indevoureth to deserve it : for a cunning flatterer, setteth the garmentes so artificially uppon the backe of him whom hee disguiseth withall, that the seames shall not bee seene : and betaketh him selfe in suche sorte to thinges like to bee true, that hee maketh them taken for true in deede. And albeit some famous writers have intreated of the meanes to discerne a friend from a flatterer, yet is it in my opinion verie harde (that I may not say impossible) to attaine to that knowledge, as well for that the worlde is full of these tame beastes, as also for that it is harde to discerne the evill which resembleth the good. And therefore it was well sayde of a wise man, That as the Woolfe is like to the Dogge, so is the flatterer to the friend : and that wee must take heede to mistake, least thinking to set our selves in the keeping of Dogges, wee fall into the devouring of Wolves. But be it so, that you feele the smell of false praise, yet notwithstanding you shall not feele in your selfe that remorse and desire of deserte, which you speake of : for this false prayse hath a shewe of trueth, and is bestowed upon you as due and deserved. I come nowe to the example of parentes, who as you say, flatter their children, to incourage them to vertue, and of children, who on the other side flatter their parentes, to wring some thing from them : and I say unto you, That these twoo cases differ. The first is not in trueth flatterie, for that there is no deceit in it.

GUAZ. Doe you not deceive a childe, when he hath lept but a little way, and you tell him hee hath leapt excellently wel ?

ANNIB. It is a good kinde of deceit which tendeth to a good ende, and which is profitable to the partie deceived, as wee Phisitions deceive sometime our Patients, in giving them the juyce of Pomegranates in steede of wine.

GUAZ. Descend to the other example of children, which flatter their parentes to get money, or something els.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. That if I be not deceived, requireth more deepe consideration: and we must first understande, that some to get favour, use to uphold and extoll whatsoever others shall say, without gainsaying any thing: some on the contrary, fall to contention continually, and crosse other mens sayings, and these two extreemes are naught, betweene which thereto lieth a way, which those keepe, who * will neither altogether sooth, neither altogether thwart, but * in an honest sort knowe howe to allowe, or disallowe the sayings of others in time and place, as it becommeth an honest man to doe. Next, wee must note, that those who holde up everie ones yeas and naves, only to the intent to delight, ought to be called jesters, but when they doe it for their advauntage, they are without question flatterers. And according to this distinction, children which imbrace their parentes to get something from them, are to be termed flatterers: but in this case, wee have further to consider, that children can not give prayse, or shewe love to their parentes, that may surmount their naturall and bounden duetie, or that may be more then their parentes thinke they have merited.

GUAZ. Yea mary, but it is a common saying, That hee which maketh more of thee then hee was woont, either hath coosened thee alreadie, or els goeth about to coosen thee. And parentes are not so blinde, but that they see in this case the subtiltie and craft of their children.

ANNIB. They doe not only perceive it, but also conceive well of it, and doe not count it craft as you doe, but rather a thing commendable, for that they see their children therein to followe nature as their Mistresse, which teacheth us to humble our selves in our neede, and crave of others by deedes sounding foorth their prayse, and setting foorth our affection towards them, and to know that hee which wil have, must aske, and he which wil enter into the house, must first knocke at the gate. And albeit we ought at all times to give prayses to our heavenly father, yet wee are most stirred theretoo, both with tongue and heart, when wee are desirous to obtaine any thing at his handes. And

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE FIRST
BOOKE

to appease his wrath, wee call him not just, but make mention of his clemency and mercy, whereof wee stande in neede. Whereof, according to this consideration, we may rightly conclude, that suche manner of deedes ought not to runne under the name of flatterie, and that infantes, no nor children of discretion, cannot (though they would) use flatterie towardes their parentes. Which Pittacus one of the seven wise men of Greece plainly shewed, saying, Never be afeard to bee counted a flatterer of thy father. And touching the example of the poore which begge almes with glavering woordes, I answere, that necessitie hath no lawe: and if to avoyde hunger, in some countries theft bee suffered, muche more ought flatterie to bee borne withall. And besides, I thinke that it is not properly to bee called flatterie: for that a Flatterer doeth not use openlye to shewe his neede, but cunningly laboureth to moove men to extende their liberalitie towardes him. And by the selfe same reason, I mainteine the cause of the Oratour, who craveth openly of the Prince or Judge, that which hee desireth to obtaine: neither ought hee any more to bee blamed, then hee which saith, take heede to thy selfe, for I meane to strike thee. For as this same manifesteth his intent, and giveth his adversary leasure to prepare to defende himselfe: so the Oratour entreth not into the felde, but that the judge first knoweth the request hee is to make, and bethinketh him of the meanes which shall bee used to sounde his opinion. There remaineth nowe no more but the last example of lovers, who I am content to confesse unto you, are in deede no better then flatterers. For a greater man then my selfe confesseth as much, writing, that if their beloved bee flat nosed, they tearme her amiable: if hauked, they call her Princely: if shee bee browne, they count her manly: if white, heavenly. But this is not to bee marvelled at, seeing lovers are both lawlesse, and witlesse, and that in their heartes as our Poet saith:

The senses beare the sway, and reason is subdued.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST And as the lover flattereth his Mistresse, so she flattereth
BOOKE her selfe, for that there is no woman so deformed, who hearing herself called bewtiful, beleeveth it not, or at least thinketh not to bee esteemed for such of her lover. And as the Crowe to give credite and consent to the prayes which the Foxe gave him, let the pray fall foorth of his mouth: so many unfortunate women have felt the evill which commeth of flatterie, for that by the breath of prayes, as a Feather in the wind, they have suffered themselves to be lifted so high, that being not able there to sustaine them selves, they have falne to the ground, and in the fall have given their honor such a soyle, that of Mistresses, they have become servauntes. Nowe touching that point of civilitie and curtesie, where you say wee salute those who are our enimies, I say that this sentence is most true, that we must not take for Doves all that say Peace bee unto you, but those ought to bee termed dissemblers, rather then flatterers.

GUAZ. In my minde, you give divers names to one selfe thing, for so much as flatterie is never without faining.

ANNIB. There is as much difference betweene those two, as betweene the generall and the speciall. For it is true that hee which flattereth, faigneth: but not on the contrary. And to explaine it unto you, beholde a fencer, who making at his enimies head, striketh him on the legge, or some where els: you may well say that this fellowe dissembleth, but not that hee flattereth. And valiant Captaines also, doe they not deceive the enimie, when they make a shewe to goe one way, and then take another? and are not victories wonne as wel by Stratagemes and policies of warre, as by force of armes? which kinde of counterfeiting is not blameable, but rather commendable. And not only amongst enimies, but amongst friendes and acquaintance, colourable dealing is tollerable, in thinges which are not prejudiciall unto them. As if I bee requested to goe see some Comedy, or some Play, or some such like thing, and that I have no minde to goe thither, I will make

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

as though I were yll at ease : or if I would not bee knowne by night, I will disguise my selfe in some sort. You see then, that dissembling stretcheth to many things, and to divers endes, and that flattery is more strict, and contained under dissimulation, as the speciall under his generall. Wherefore I conclude, that as it is not lawefull to dissemble in flattering, for that it is not hurtfull to him towardes whom it is used, so is it permitted (neither can it bee saide to bee a faulte) to dissemble without harme, and without intent to hurt another. I graunt well, that hee which maketh a shewe to love one, to the intent to deceive him, or do him wrong, is much to blame, and that the Philosopher counteth him worse then a forger of monie, for that there can bee no friendship, where there is counterfeiting. But if for civilitie and good manner sake, I salute one whom I am acquainted withall, without shewing any affection towardes him, I ought not therefore to be called a dissembler : for that I am mooved to do him honour, rather in way of curtesie, then of good wil. Besides, you knowe that the worlde is full of naughtie men, whom wee justly hate for their imperfections : but it is not good to give them to understande what yll will wee beare them. And bethinke your selfe heerein, that many are beloved which are not honoured, as children, who are loved, not honoured of their parents : and contrariwise many are honoured, which are not loved, as some Princes, not well liked of their subjects, or some Magistrates, which are honoured, but not loved of the people : And therefore wee cannot oftentimes, nor ought not to faile in civilitie and curtesie, in respect only of our owne duetie. For wee are bound to * re-salute those which salute us, bee they our inferiours or equals : If they Princes or Magistrates, or our Superiours, wee ought to doe them honour for the reverence due to their estate, if not for affection. I thinke I have sufficiently shewed the difference betweene fauning, and flattering. Now I say againe, returning to flatterers, that they are men of most vile and naughtie nature. And though it be a harde matter, as wee have saide already, to discerne

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST a friende from a flatterer, yet wee must note, that com-
BOOKE monly the greater are flattered by the lesser, and the more
they are in prosperitie, the more they are beset with
flatterers : who alwaies make their repaire thither where
profite is to bee reaped. Whereof it commeth that Princes
are ever besieged by these evill spirites : whereupon Car-
neades used to say, that Princes sonnes never learne to doe
any thing well, but only to ryde, for that their governours
and teachers seeke to please them, and make them beleewe
they are sufficiently seene in thinges whereof they have no
skill at all, which happeneth not in ryding their horses, for
the horse, which is no flatterer, and which maketh no more
account of the great then of the smal, throweth them to
the ground, if they cannot sitte fast in the saddle. And
therefore we must beware of such persons, both for that they
are hurtful to us, and because God is displeased with them.
And I am in doubt whether bee the greater offence of him
that slaunderously reproveth the good, or of him that
flatteringly commendeth the evill. I remember I have
learned long since, that God is greivously offended to heare
one either like to himself discommended, or unlike, com-
mended : and no doubt, but it is a great fault, through
flatterie to commend for one thing, for which hee ought
of right to bee reprovèd : which is signified unto us by the
sentence, Woe bee unto you which call the evill good : These
flatterers are resembled to those which put a pillow under
our heads, and delicate and soft Feathers under our bodies
to make us sleepe. Likewise those are in great fault which
flatter of purpose to hurt, like as Judas did. And therefore
it is written, That it is better to bee beaten of ones friende,
then kissed of his enimie, to wit, a flatterer : and for the
conclusion, to commend that in one which is evill; is the
deede of a deceiver, and a very kinde of treason. * And
therefore the Emperour Sigismund is worthie commendation,
who hearing a certaine shamelesse fellowe call him
God, up with his fist, and gave him a boxe on the eare, and
when hee saide, why doest thou strike mee Emperour ? Hee
answered, why doest thou bite mee flatterer ? *

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

GUAZ. Forsomuch as you have plainly shewed unto mee howe hatefull and hurtful these flatterers are, I thinke good they were scored up amongst the Intollerable. THE FIRST
BOOKE

* ANNIB. Nay, let us set them even cheeke by cheeke by the evill tongued, upon the seate of the tollerable : and taking both of them as friendes, let us take heed of them as enimies : and put upon our head a Helmet to defende our eares from their perilous speeches, remembring that he which willingly listeneth to flatterers, is like to the sheepe that giveth the woolf suck : or to him which leadeth by the hand another, who setteth his foote before him to give him a fall. And when you perceive these glosing merchants to prayse you, and extoll you to the skies, desire them of curtesie to let you remaine on earth, saying unto them, that if you stand in neede of praise, you will praise your selfe ; or els doe as a certaine Gentleman my friende did, who having a greate while, and with great patience given eare to a flatterer which had commended him above the Moone, saide unto him in the end, I know not what to doe with these praises, for if I reject them, I shal accuse you of flatterie, and if I accept them, I shall shewe my selfe desirous of vaine glory : therefore like good fellowes let us part them, give mee the one halfe, take the other to your selfe.

GUAZ. But in discretion the Gentleman ought not to have taken halfe, but to have forsaken all.

ANNIB. Nay by your leave, hee shewed great discretion in it, for flattery beeing alwayes mixed with some parte of trueth, hee was wise to accept the trueth, and leave the lyes to the flatterer.

* GUAZ. I like your opinion well touching the repulse wee ought to give to suche counterfaite praises, but in this point there commeth to my minde a doubt, if I, mooved by the good wil I beare you, and having fit occasion ministred, give unto you in your presence true and due praise, which you have worthily deserved for some deede of yours, whether it shalbee your part to reject it, or passe it over with silence.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. For that silence woulde bee a signe of disdain-fulnesse or lightnesse, I either with Christian humilitie would answere you, in referring those praises to God as occasion of all good, or else with a Morall modestie, I woulde seeke somewhat to extenuate my glory, and make you or some other partaker of those praises. In like manner, as Pyrrhus that great Captaine did, who beeing returned from warre with speedy and prosperous victorie, and hearing his souldiers call him a couragious eagle: answered, If I be an eagle, you are the cause of it, for that with your armes and weapons as it were with feathers you have upholden and susteined mee.* But it is time to goe out of the conversation of flatterers, and to conclude, that hee is happy, which neither flattereth other, nor suffereth himselfe to bee flattered by others: which deceiveth not, nor is deceived: whiche neither doeth yll, nor suffereth yll to bee done to him.

GUAZ. For so much as the friend, and the flatterer have so great conformitie together, that hardly one can bee knowne from the other, I would gladly have you instruct mee howe I ought to behave my selfe not to bee reputed a flatterer.

ANNIB. You must observe therein two things: the one, never to praise a man in his presence, a fault that fewe can take heede of, not remembring the saying of the Greeke Poet: Hee which speaketh ill of mee behinde my backe, doeth mee no wrong, hee which speaketh well of me before my face, reprocheth mee. But for that there are some whiche will thinke you eyther proude or envious, if you praise them not, the other thing to bee observed, you must take with them another course, which is, to imitate the dogge of Aegypt, which drinketh at the river of Nyle, and then runneth his way: so you must seeme to acknowledge their deserts, and that you wil not utter their praises in their presence, for feare to bee thought to flatter them, leaving neverthelesse this little Suger in their mouth.

GUAZ. Have you any other persons of the ranke of the tollerable, which are neither to bee desired nor avoyded?

ANNIB. I have saide unto you alredy, that to the vice

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

of flatterie, gainesaying is opposed, and therefore I thinke **THE FIRST**
good wee speake of these contentious fellows, whiche **BOOKE**
obstinately withstand the opinions of other, and wil never
leave till they have the last woorde, not waying the dis-
liking or displeasure of others.

GUAZ. Albeit I cannot abide the qualities and company
of such manner of men, yet I remember I have hearde a
vertuous and noble Gentleman to make good account of
them, saying, That those are indued with excellent wittes,
whiche can maintayne their private opinions against the
common opinion of all: and that wee hearken unto them
with more attention and admiration. And in good sooth,
if you shoulde with a long discourse proove unto mee that
the Sunne is cleere and hot, you woulde make mee have no
great lyst to listen unto you, for that you shoulde tell mee
nothing, but that which I knewe before: but if you will
make good that it is obscure and colde, O howe you woulde
stirre up my spirites, and make mee attentive to heare you.
It was therefore, that a certaine Philosopher hearing that
there was one preparing himselfe to make a speache in the
praise of Hercules, answered, Why? who discommendeth
him? Beholde on the contrarie, with howe great pleasure
and admiration wee reade the Paradoxes of divers wittie
and learned writers, specially the pleasant pamphlets made
in praise of the plague, and of the French poxe. And if you
replie, that this belongeth rather to a fantastickall Poet,
then to a grave authour, I woulde have you consider, in
what estimation the Philosopher Favorine is, onely for the
fame hee hath woone, for extolling, with many and singuler
praises, the quarterne Ague: which notwithstanding the
Frenchmen wishe to their enimies, as the greatest evill
which may befall them. And therefore I am of opinion,
that in things of most difficultie, consisteth most excellencie
and admiration. And I see you Philosophers dispute and
argue one against another, and holde singuler opinions
farre from the trueth: so that the Gentleman of whom
I spake even now, would place these men rather amongst
the desirable, then the tollerable.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. I thinke good that whom you have nowe named, should bee put in the rowe of the desirable and commendable, which deserve not the name of contentious: for though they swarve from the trueth, yet they have some shew of reason in their talke, and besides, they do not thinke what they say, doing it to no other ende, but to shewe their sharpe and good wit, not that they have conceived any such opinion in themselves: so that it were great folly to thinke that Favorine was desirous to have the quarterne Ague, and those other writers the Plague. But those whom I call contentious and overthwarters, are for the most parte grosse headed fellowes: and it is an olde saying, that the vice of contradiction is proper to men of small discretion: who oppugne the trueth, either of ignorance, or of obstinacie: and they are like to Heretikes, who being convicted by invincible reasons, yet will yelde nothing at all, but reply still to the contrarie. Moreover, these contentious companions love to bee doeing with everie one, and yet still goe by the worse: and when they are able to mainteine Argument no longer by any reason, they enter into a chafe, and seeke to get the upper hande by outcries, swearing, threatning, and arrogant demeanour. And some time it happeneth that they meete with men of like nature, whereby even for very trifles they fall to dyre debate and strife. Touching that you alledge afterwarde of Philosophers, I answere you, that it is not onely lawefull and meete for them to dispute, but also for all other men, when they enter into reasoning amongst themselves, and are of contrary opinions: and he deserveth greatest praise, which defendeth the hardest part, and though they disagree in wordes, yet they disagree not in love and mutuall goodwill, but seeke with one accord the trueth: not unlyke to those which make Cordes, who though they winde and twist one contrarie to the other, yet they thereby accomlishe the worke they take in hande. But yet disputations have their boundes and limites prescribed, which it is not lawfull to passe without loosing the name of a Disputer, and getting the title of contentious caveling

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Sophisters, who many times thereby come to mischief, and by being too earnest in contrarying, have been distraught of their right understanding. And as things, by making them too thinne and fine, are soone broken, so by too much contention, the trueth is made intricate and doubtfull. And therefore those are to bee called contentious, who not of purpose to dispute or exercise their wit, but of a contemptuous arrogancie, hold argumentes not only repugnant to the trueth, but altogether dissonant from reason.

THE FIRST
BOOKE
GUAZ. What doe you take to bee the occasion of this fault ?

ANNIB. Marry a mother with her two children, to wit, ignorance with selfe love, and vaine perswasion : whereof it commeth, that those which knowe nothing, thinke they know all thinges, and holde their ignorance for wisdom.

GUAZ. In deede the first Chapter of fooles, is to esteeme themselves wise.

ANNIB. You knowe it is the easiest thing in the worlde, for a man to deceive himselfe : but the wise man admonisheth us, not to bee wise in our owne conceite, for that such wisdom is called divelish : and verily hee which knoweth most, taketh upon him least, and yeeldeth to reason. And therefore no marvell though the ignoraunt people bee full of contention. Wee will then conclude, that to reason without reason, is to take paines to make himselfe evyll thought of, and that these caveling quarellous merchantes are greatly to be blamed, notwithstanding we must be faine to beare with them.

GUAZ. As you have shewed the way howe wee may defend our selves against slaunderers and flatterers, so I wold have you shew your mind how wee should behave ourselves with these overthwart persons.

ANNIB. When you perceive your selfe to prevaile nothing by reasoning with your friende, and that there is doubt of some disorder, you ought rather to bowe then to breake, feeding his humour, if it bee not in such a case as silence may breede greater offence. For when a man forsaketh

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST reason, and suffereth himselfe to bee overcome with anger,
BOOKE it is our parts wisely to beare with his imperfection, according to the Proverbe, Cut not the fire with the yron: and we must permit sometimes prudence, to give place to timoritie.

GUAZ. I knowe a Gentleman, who if hee chaunce to fall in companie with one of these obstinate fellowes, rather then hee will stande in contention with him, useth to say: Sir wee will never strive about the matter, I am content it shalbe as you say. And as one of them asked him, whiche eye of the right, or of the left, was able to discern a thing furthest: to take from him all occasion of contention, he answered forthwith, which it shall please you.

ANNIB. Such answeres, if they bee made in gentle maner, without scoffing, they are very convenient, and they are of force to make the obstinate acknowledge his fault.

GUAZ. Doe you not thinke wee have spoken enough of these manner of men?

ANNIB. I thinke wee may couple with these, some other troublesome fellowes, who offend, not by ignorance, but sharpen their wittes onely to provoke others, who upon every worde will make a Comentarie, and lye in waite to take others in a trippe in that they shall say: This fault is peculiar to certaine schoolemaisters, and other professors of learning, who will oft times shape very newe founde answeres, and nowe and then propose such doubtfull doubttes, that are enough to make a dogge runne a myle without looking behinde him. But sometime they meete with mates that dresse them in their kinde, and yeelde them the honour which is due unto them. Like as a poore craftie clowne served his sonne, who about every worde, woulde bee arguing with him, for having one day nothing but foure egges upon the table for their dinner. The young gentleman (forsooth) to shewe his wit, would needes undertake to prove that there were vii. for that the iii. is contained in the number of foure, and iiij. and iiij. make vij. The father, to avoyd strife, tooke the iiij. egges, saying: I wil eate these, and take you the other iiij.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

GUAZ. What resteth now to bee spoken of?

THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. We have now to speake of lyers, who swarve from the trueth, for another purpose, and in other sort then the contentious doe. And first and formost, lyars are flatterers, dissemblers, boasters, and vaine glorious, never ceassing to set foorth their owne praises, enterlacing lyes amongst them : a fault though not great, yet which greatly misliketh us. For there is nothing spites us more, then to heare a man commend himselfe.

GUAZ. Those are tearmed houshold witnesses, who perhaps praise themselves, for lacke of good neighbours.

ANNIB. They should do better to spend that time, which they imploy in praising, or (to say more truely) in blaming themselves, in getting, by their commendable deedes, true praise, which onely proceedeth from praise worthie persons. But they are so farre in love with themselves, that they are nothing set by of others : forgetting the saying, That hee which washeth his mouth with his owne praise, soyleth himselfe with the suddes that come of it ; and, that praise in a mans owne mouth, is spilt. But as the fault of these vaine speakers is light, when it hurteth no body, so it is greevous and haynous, when it is prejudiciall to others. And amongst many examples which might bee alleaged, the wickednesse of those is not to bee concealed, which make boast of their worthie conquestes in love matters, bewraying the frailenesse of some women, to whom they have promised secresie by a thousand false othes,

Which afterwards the windes, disperse amid the ayre.

GUAZ. The othes of lovers, carry as much credite as the vowes of Mariners. But what think you of others, who falsly make their vaunt to have had the use of that woman, to whom they never in their lives spake worde : and seeke to spot her with reproch, in such sort, as in old time the false accusers of innocent Susanna did.

ANNIB. Those which blowe foorth such blastes, deserve to have their winde stopt with a halter : and those deserve little lesse, which wil lightly beleeve such lewde tales, and

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST report them again, in such sort, that in short space a most
BOOKE honest woman shalbe most wrongfully taken of the people for a common harlot, I leave it unto you to thinke what a harts grief it is to her to be so unjustly slaundered. Let us therefore conclude, that all lyes, which turne to the hurt or dishonour of others, are divelish and detestable.

GUAZ. I cannot for my part away with the company of those other lyars, which at no time tell trueth, though it turne not to the hurt of any.

ANNIB. You have reason, for as he, which plainly telleth the trueth, sheweth himself to be an honest man, and of noble condition: so he which lieth, doth the act of a slave, and of a disloyal, unjust, and indiscrete person. * And therefore wise men ought to print in their heart the saying of Pithagoras, who being demaunded when men did any thing which might make them like to God: answered, when they tell the trueth.* And if you marke well the nature of lyers, you shall finde them to bee impudent, and without shame, and therefore well saide the Philosopher, That justice resembled a pure virgin, for that the puritie therof is spotted by leasings. And though lying bee unseemely for every man, yet is it more tollerable in one of base calling, and who is driven thereto of necessitie: And therefore in holy Scripture, a riche man being a lyar is greatly reproved.

GUAZ. There are divers which thinke to get the name of pleasant conceited fellows, by telling some monstrous strange tale, to make the hearers merie, or cause them to marvell, and crave the Poets priviledge, to use the figure Hyperbole at their pleasure. Like as hee, which tolde that going a hunting, hee found a Boore so olde, that hee was become starke blinde, and that another young Boore for very compassion, put his taile into the olde ones mouth, and so lead him out to feede: Now hee shooting at them, cut of the young Boores taile, which hung still in the old Boores mouth, and running quickly, tooke the taile in his hand, and brought the poore Boore by a long way even unto the Citie, thinking stil that his fellowe had lead him.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. I thinke it troubled him more to tell this tale, THE FIRST
BOOKE
then to leade the Boore ?

GUAZ. These felowes perswade themselves so earnestly to beleewe a lye, that they woulde have you beleewe it too, and if you doe not, they thinke you misuse them.

ANNIB. It is well doone not to beleewe them, but they do us wrong to force us to beleewe that which is false, which is nothing els but to give us a gudgin, and floute us like credulous fooles, but in the end they doe penance for their fault, for being once knowne for cogging and lying mates, they are never after credited, though they tell the trueth, which this saying sheweth :

The Liar never is beleewed, although an oth he take,
the honest ever is beleewed, although a lye he make.

I denie not, but that it is commendable to coyne a lye at some time, and in some place, so that it tend to some honest ende.

GUAZ. There commeth to my mind, touching these kindes of lyes, a pleasant example, happened in the Court, where I knewe a Princes sonne, being about twelve yeeres old, who in behaviour and good conditions surpassed al other his equals in the Court, but hee had one childishe fault, which neither by admonishing, neither by reprehending, neither by threatning hee coulde bee made to leave. Which was this, Hee woulde through negligence suffer his nose alwaies to be sneveled, and tooke no care to wype it : while his governer tooke paines to amend this fault, there commeth on a time to this child, to crave his devotion, a poore old man, whose nose by some infirmitie was become mervellous great, deformed, ful of pimples, precious, and monstrous : the childe with a certain feare mixed with compassion, was much mooved at it, wherupon his discrete governour began to say unto him, that hee had knowne that poore man a long time, and remembred hee had seene him in his youth with a little nose, well fashioned and sound, but that afterwarde the snevil and filth for want of wyping and making it cleane had brought it into that case. The

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE childe was put into such a feare by these words, that hee began forthwith to spit, and to blowe and wype his nose in such sort, that hee never after needed to bee put in minde of it. And therefore this lye was profitable to the Prince, and commendable for the governour.

ANNIB. It is very true : and as suche lyars are to bee praised, so the other are to bee blamed. and to bee registred amongst those which are neither to bee desired nor avoided. Besides, there are certain curious felowes to be discommended, which trouble everie one in using alwaies this worde *Wherefore*, being desirous to enter too farre into other mens matters, which is perchance a fault greater then it is taken for : for there is never any curious person, but hee is likewise malicious, and besides, over talkative, playing the tale bearer from one to another, and therefore the Poet blameth him which is inquisitive of that hee hath nothing to doe withall.

GUAZ. As I remember I have read of one, who carying a present under his cloke, and beeing asked what hee caryed there, answered : Doe you not see howe it is of purpose covered, for feare least you shoulde knowe it ?

ANNIB. I remember I have read the same, and another like thing of king Antigonus, who passing by his armie, entered the Tent of Antagoras the Poet, and having founde him seethyng certaine fishes, saide unto him : Doe you thinke that Homer medled with the seething of fishes while hee wrote the deedes of Agamemnon ? To whom the Poet answered, Thinke you that Agamemnon, buzied about the execution of his enterprises, was curious to knowe whether there were any sodde fishe in his Campe ? But if curiositie bee blameable in worldly affaires, it is detestable in matters of religion : and therefore wee are admonished not to seeke to knowe thinges which belong not to us to knowe. Nowe as the curious are neither to bee desired nor avoyded, so ought wee to account of the ambitious.

GUAZ. Your opinion is then, as farre as I see, that ambition bringeth forth evill effectes ?

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. Why, who knoweth not that?

THE FIRST
BOOKE

GUAZ. Mary, I for my part see not howe it worketh other then good: for that it wakeneth drowsie spirites, driveth away slouthfulnesse, and fearefulnesse, styrreth up the minde to the understanding of commendable thinges, and to the executing of couragious enterprises, and heaveth those that followe it, to the high degree of dignitie and honour.

ANNIB. So long as a man passeth not those bounds, he ought not to bee tearmed ambitious, but couragious, for so much as these same are works commendable, and vertues: but that can not be saide of those which proceede naturally of ambition, which altogether bereaveth them of rest, which set no staye to their restlesse desires: which filleth them full of pensive care, blindeth their understanding, rayseth them aloft, to the intent to throw them downe headlong, to breake their neckes, and bring them to destruction. And thereupon it is saide, that Lucifer through pride and ambition fell from heaven, desiring rather to commaunde, then obey. And it is saide by an other, That ambition is the crosse and torment of the ambitious. And therefore when I saide that ambition is the cause of many abuses, I ment not those men, which knowing their owne valour, aspire to high enterprises and honours, which by the instinct of nature we all covet: for that honour is the rewarde of vertue, and counted a divine thing. But my meaning is of the ambitious, who without taking any paine, without doing any thing meete for a noble minde, and without any foundation of deserte, seeke in companie to goe before others, and to be placed above others.

GUAZ. Those in trueth are to be detested, and I know some of them, who * at the entring in at the dore, or at the sitting downe at the table, make hast to set their foote before others, and are verie sorie when others usurpe over them that foolishe preeminence: not knowing that the place neither giveth nor taketh away vertue.

ANNIB. Those which doe so, perceive them selves litle accounted of, and perchaunce knowe verie well that no

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST bodie will say unto them, I pray you sir, goe before. But
BOOKE it is great glorie, and a signe of great desert, when that
honour is done to one without striving for it, and it is most
certaine, that he which setting aside all ambition, humbleth
himselfe beneath others, is of best estimation, and of best
education. But women fall chiefly into this vanitie,
and heereupon there often ariseth amongst them the best
sport in the worlde, for none of them beeing willing to give
place, and everie one of them being ready to take place, they
occupie the way and the upper roomes as it were by force :
and withall, you shal often heare amongst them one say,
my husband is a Doctour, an other, mine is a Gentleman,
an other, I am descended from the Troyans, an other
maketh vaunt of her dowry and her jewels, wherewith shee
boasteth her selfe to be able to buy the other out of house
and home, in such sorte, that if the husbandes fall to deale
in these quarrelles, they will never be decided or deter-
mined without blowes.

GUAZ. And what thinke you of the ambition of those men
who are never mery, nor in any countenance, but when they
have a great traine of serving men at their tayle : and if they
chance to want them, suche is their folly, (their fansie I
shoulde say) that they will not stirre foorth of their doores.

ANNIB. That kinde of ambition is common to Asses,
who in like case will not goe before, if they have none to
followe them. Of the number of the ambitious, are the
haughtie and proude, whose company is wonderfull hatefull,
and contrarie to our nature, whereto humanitie and curtesie
is most agreeable. And in my fansie, such people may bee
resembled to tyrantes, which care not though they be hated,
so that they may be feared. And therefore this sort of
persons never love to humble them selves, fearing that if
they shoulde shewe them selves good fellowes, and become
mates for everie man, they should growe into contempt,
so that their reputation thereby might be diminished.
But though these fellowes take bigly upon them, and are
puft up with pride, yet assure your selfe, that their heartes
are filled full rather with winde then worthinesse.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

GUAZ. O howe these glorious fellowes are hated of the Frenchmen. Which belike is the cause that they can not brooke the Spaniardes, who are counted verie proude and loftie, especially of those who are not thorowly acquainted with them. Which I speake, for that I have been in company with some of them, who in shew have seemed very loftie, and yet in deede have been verie lowly. THE FIRST
BOOKE

ANNIB. It may be, that the Spaniardes likewise will not like of the Frenchmen, for their easie acquaintance and sodaine familiaritie. And in my opinion, betweene these two extremities, our nation keepeth the meane, where you shall commonly see joyned together, a grave kinde of curtesie, and a curteous kinde of gravitie, but those whom I terme proud and high minded, offende both in shewe and in their doings, and they stand alwayes upon their Pantoffles, despising everie one, and desiring to bee honoured of everie one: Neither must we looke to live familiarly with them, but humbly to doe honour unto them, and to offer up incense unto them, as it were to the halowed Alters: so that it is no mervayle if they be odious to all men. Which kinde of men, a pleasant writer scoffing at, sayeth, That that meate is unpleasant in taste, which smelleth of the smoake. But what say I, odious to men, seeing God himselfe hath them in hate, who withstandeth the proude, and sheweth mercy to the meeke and humble in heart.

GUAZ. It may be well saide of such men, that which the Poet writeth,

He falles most lowe, who seekes to climbe most high.

ANNIB. Our discourse would be too long, and perchaunce superfluous, if wee should search out one after an other, all which are spotted with this fault, and intreate of the nature and qualitie of them: And therefore I thinke good, that wee set an end to our discourse in this point.

GUAZ. There is somewhat yet that stickes in my stomake, for your minde is, that wee should flie only the infamous, and those which are notoriously naught, and tollerate the yll, which we have heere made mention of: by meanes

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST whereof, in my opinion, you slacke the bridle too much to
BOOKE this Conversation.

ANNIB. I might well answere you, according to the rules of the Civilians, that wee ought to restraints things which are evill, and set at large things commendable, in which number we presuppose Conversation to be : but I say unto you, that according as I have handled the matter, it is rather restrained then otherwise. For though I have permitted you to tollerate, to wit, neither to seeke, neither to shun the above named, who are numberlesse, yet I gave you not libertie to seeke or crave the companie of other then the good, who are but fewe. And whosoever shall observe that order, well he may accompany with many by chaunce, but with fewe by choyce. And your selfe, though by reason of your affaires or other accident, you shall have to deale with divers persons, yet you will like much better, and desire more willingly, the companie of one or two, to whom you shall be affectioned for the good partes you knowe to bee in them. Whereby I conclude, that the companie which wee come into by chaunce, consisteth of many persons, but that which is voluntarie, which we ought to covet, containeth but fewe folke in it.

GUAZ. For one doubt which you cleare me of, not unlike the Hyders head, there arise seven in that place, and according to that saying,

At everie step, in steppeth a newe thought.

Nowe tell mee a little, if a Harlot or a Baude, or some such defamed person, shall come in the open streete, or in some other publike place, to talke with mee, will you that without suffering him to meete mee, I runne away from him, as if he were excommunicated, or had the plague?

ANNIB. It were not meete for you, who are a private person, to give eare unto his woordes, but for a Magistrate it were not amisse.

GUAZ. Then hee which giveth eare unto him, doth not flie from him, which is repugnant to your first order. And he which flieth not from him, beareth him selfe indifferently

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

towardses the intollerable, and the tollerable: which is **THE FIRST**
likewise contrarie to your distinction. **BOOKE**

ANNIB. If a Harlot, Ruffian, or other infamous person, shoulde goe to the Duke your maister, to crave justice, or put up some other honest request, would hee drive him out of his presence?

GUAZ. No.

ANNIB. If he came before him, to talke familiarly with him, would he sende him packing out of his sight?

GUAZ. There is no doubt of it.

ANNIB. By this diversitie then you may knowe, that the intollerable is sometimes tollerable, not in respect of him selfe, but of the occasion which bringeth him into companie.

GUAZ. I understand you, but yet there arise other doubtess, for so much as amongst these tollerable, which wee have named, there is founde greate difference in their imperfections. For the faulte of a vaigneglorious boaster, or a contentious overthwarter, is farre lesse then that of a pernicious flatterer, or a malicious sclanderer: and yet you put them all in one predicament. Besides, I thinke it impossible, that hee shoulde encline rather to good then to evill, who hath one of these faultes. For that one of these is of force, to obscure and deface all the good partes whiche shall bee in him. And therefore in my opinion they are to bee put in the number of the intollerable.

ANNIB. Wee have alreadie concluded, if you remember it, that wee ought to admit into our companie all those whiche are not marked in the face, and whiche are not commonly holden for defamed, nor excluded out of good and honest companie, notwithstanding they be sprinckled with some imperfection.

But to satisfie you, let mee aske you if you knewe, in the courte of Fraunce, men of diverse nations, as I remember you have alreadie sayde?

GUAZ. I knowe there besides Frenchmen, Spaniardes, Englishmen, Fleminges, Almanes, Scottes, and Italians.

ANNIB. With which of al these were you most often, and most willingly conversant?

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST GUAZ. You may well thinke, that by my will I alwayes
BOOKE got my selfe into the companie of Italians.

ANNIB. But which Italians ?

GUAZ. The Lombardes.

ANNIB. And amongst the Lombardes, which made you your choice of ?

GUAZ. Of those of mine owne countrie.

ANNIB. And of those same, which liked you best ?

GUAZ. Those whom I knewe most agreeable to my minde, for that as the saying is, like will to like.

ANNIB. It is even so, like as also it is true, that we naturally abhor thinges, which differ from our nature. Wherof it commeth, that one which is merily disposed, can not away with one which is heavily given. One that is dul headed, cannot abide one that is sharp witted : and contrarywise, the mery like of the mery, and the sad of the sad. And therefore we have to consider, that nature hath put upon us twoo persons, wherof the one is common to all men, in so much as they are partakers of reason, and more excellent then beastes : the other is proper to every one, touching the difference which is seene in the countenance and jesture of the body and in the diversitie of the mindes, wherof every one tendeth and inclineth not onely to some good, but also to some evill. And by that meanes you see that one offendeth by arrogancie, another by obstinacie, another by misreporting, another by flatering, another by covetousnes, another by vaine-gloriousnes, and you must think that there is not any, in whom there is not some fault or imperfection, either greater or lesser then that which is in our selves. But forsomuch as at this day we can not finde either friendes or parentes, which are in all pointes agreeable to our disposition and nature, wee must frame our selves to beare with the imperfections of others, and according to the saying, we must love a freend with his imperfection. And for that perfect and vertuous men are rare in the world, with whom we might live to our heartes desire, wee ought not to reject the companie of any, so that hee have in him any shewe of vertue and goodnesse.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

* But to be acceptable in companie, we must put of as it THE FIRST
were our own fashions and manners, and cloath our selves BOOKE
with the conditions of others, and imitate them so farre
as reason will permit. And in some, touching the respect
of honestie and vertue, wee ought to bee alwayes one and
the same. But touching the diversitie of the persons with
whom wee shall be conversaunt, wee must alter our selves
into an other : according to that olde saying, The heart
altogether unlike, and the face altogether like to the people.
And he, which shall not frame him selfe to doe this,* shall
bee driven to curse Conversation, and to pray unto God
with the snayle (as it is in the Fable) that to avoyde yll
neighbours and naughtie companie, hee will give him the
grace to bee able to carrie his house about with him.
Neither ought any to perswade him selfe that hee is without
fault, for I am sure if I should refuse the companie of a
cavilling contentious fellowe, hee woulde perhappes refuse
mine for some greater imperfection. And therefore I am
of opinion, that without looking too precisely upon one
fault, wee ought to admit the companie of all those, who
in the rest of their woorkes and actions walke uprightly.
And it is lawfull likewise, sometime to make as though wee
see not their faultes, and that wee have a good opinion
of them.

Touching this point, I remember the doinges of the Duke
of Nevers, who making a feast in this Citie, committed the
charge of invyting the Gentlewomen, to a young man, that
was reputed to be very vicious and naught : wherat the
Citizens mervailed not a litle, forsomuche as his excellencie
was advertised long before of the qualities of this fellowe :
and heereupon some of the Ladies being in familiar talke,
fell to a kinde of playe, by the priviledge whereof one of
them was injoynd to demaund of the Duke, why, being so
many young Gentlemen in the Citie of great wisdom and
good behaviour, hee caused the Gentlewomen to bee bidden
to the feast, by a dishonest and ill disposed person : to
whom hee answered, that hee was sure the good and hee
shoulde alwayes well agree together, and therefore hee

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST thought it needfull by some meanes to winne the good
BOOKE will of the ill.

GUAZ. I understande you, hee meant to imitate him which light his candell before the ymage of the Divell. Yet in my opinion to favour the ill, is to offende the good : and I mervaile howe a Prince of so discreete judgement, coulde make so undiscreete a choice. But I thinke hee did it, as hee, who having not long tyme to sojourne there, sought by all meanes, to make every one thinke well of him, after his departure : and like unto the Sunne, hee woulde spread the beames of his bountie uppon all sortes of persons. But you may assure your selfe, hee woulde not have made such a choice in his owne Countrie, where hee is not to learne to put a difference betweene the qualities of his subjectes, to lift upp the good, and throwe downe the evill.

ANNIB. I thinke verily that it is requisite so to do, but I doe not thinke hee had any such meaning as you speake of. For wise men of good judgement, his likes take no care to bee beloved of the ill, but knowe that when they are well accounted of by the ill, they are ill thought of by the good.

GUAZZO. I am verily perswaded, that all men of understanding, bestowe great labour to get the good wil, yea even of the most wicked : and for my part, by my wil, I would not have the ill wil of any, whether good or bad. And I pray God to give mee the grace to be able to satisfie thoroughly all sortes of persons.

ANNIB. You shoulde then have a speciall priviledge above all other men. But call to minde the old proverbe, that Jupiter himselfe pleaseth not all. I never yet hitherto knewe man so good and vertuous, which hath not been subject to the malice and slaunders of some one : and I say resolutely unto you, that as not caring to knowe what reporte goeth of you, nor to content any, you shall playe but an arrogante and proude parte : so will you become too scrupulous, and will never bee healed of your sicknesse, if you thinke to stoppe everie ones mouth :

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

Whiche were to eate up your heart, as they say. Take **THE FIRST**
heede onely to content the good, and never take care **BOOKE**
what the evill say or thinke of you : For their injuries
can not hurt vertue and innocencie. And knowe you,
that the divine Philosopher willeth us to take no care for
that, whiche the multitude reporteth of us, but onelye for
that, whiche a wise and discreete man giveth out.

GUAZ. Doe you not see, that when a strange Gentleman
commeth to visite us at our house, howe carefull wee are to
provide that his servauntes bee well intreated ? That is
for nothing else but for feare least afterwarde they make
some yll reporte of us : where wee are sure, the maisters
will content them selves with the entertainment we give
them.

ANNIB. I thinke that servauntes, beeing naturally
blabbes and full of tongue, wee doe it rather in hope that
they will set foorth our curtesie, then for feare that they
shoulde finde faulte with our covetousnes : and, besides,
our good will and curtesie can not bee fully shewed of us,
nor gratefully accepted of the head, if it extende not to
the members. You knowe also, that there are certaine
maisters of that nature, that they love in a manner better
the ease and good usage of their servauntes, then of them
selves : And therefore all the good cheare bestowed on them,
is in respect of their maisters. But howsoever it bee, I
am resolute in this, that wee ought to doe well for the love
of vertue, and not for the feare of evill report.

GUAZ. There are some whiche doe well, not for the
love of vertue, nor yet for the feare of infamie, but upon
a bravery : like as those who at faires and markets use great
liberalitie, in bestowing fayrings on Gentlewomen, and
then pinch for it, when they come home in their owne
houses, and perchaunce keepe from the poore servants
their wages.

ANNIB. That liberalitie is like the match of a Candle,
which must needes faile foorthwith, and therefore their
renowne lasteth no longer then the faire. And they may
well be compared to certaine litle beasts called Ephemeris,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE FIRST BOOKE which are bred neere the river of Hyppan in Scithia, whose life lasteth onely one day. And me thinkes those men make profession to loose their credite at home, to get it abroad: Notwithstanding, when the stinking breath commeth from the stomake, it booteth not much to put some sweete thing in the mouth, to leave there a pleasant smell: for at length the ill favour surmounteth, and it is not possible but the taste of the vessel must bee felt. Therefore these may thinke themselves wel ynough dealt withal, to bee put in the rowe of the other tollerable. But Gentleman, I have suffred my selfe to bee so farre carried away with the pleasantnesse of your speeche, that I never thought howe some of that time is slipt away, which I ought to have bestowed in visiting my patients. Seeing then, that we see, that conversation is profitable and necessarie, that men of evil life are to bee eschewed, that those who wrie rather to the good, then the evil, are to be tollerated, and that the good and vertuous are to be desired: I will for this time take my leave of you, and to morrowe I wil returne hither, if it please you, to discourse another houre of the civil and commendable manners of conversation, according to our determination.

GUAZ. Your returne shalbee more gratefull unto mee, then your departure, and I assure you, this little space betweene, will seeme passing long unto me: goe in Gods name, and returne after, to redouble my comfort.

ANNIB. The comfort wil be mutual, for that our love is mutual. Farewel.

An ende of the first Booke.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE SECOND BOOKE OF CIVILE CONVERSATION,

written by M. Steven Guazzo.

Wherein is discoursed, first of the manner of conversation, meete for all persons, which shal come in any companie, out of their owne houses, and then of the particular points, which ought to bee observed in companie betweene yong men, and old, gentlemen, and yomen, Princes and private persons, learned, and unlearned, citizens, and straungers, religious, and secular, men, and women.

GUAZZO.



AM not able fully to expresse (M. Annibal) howe long the time of your absence hath seemed unto mee, nor howe earnestly I have longed for the comfort of your returne, by reason of the profitable and pleasant discourses, which this day I hope for at your hands. For me thinkes I see * the hand of so great a Philo-

sopher as you are,* to cast a golden net into the large sea of morall Philosophie, to inclose therein, in short time, all the divine precepts which appertaine to our life.

ANNIB. Nay looke not I pray you for that, for therin you shal but do as the countrie fellow did, who attended in vaine that the river should finish his course, that hee might

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

have gone over it. I neither can, neither ought in these discourses to followe the steps of the auncient Philosophers, for albeit their reasons be at this day the same, that they were a thousand yeere since, yet neither the times, the men, nor the manners are like. I denye not but that there have been amongst us, unjustly brought in, many corrupt customes, repugnant to the lawes of Philosophie, but they have by this tyme taken so deepe footing and roote, that it is impossible to roote them out. For that the worlde is come to this passe, that it counteth any thing to bee lawefull, which is delightful. Wherefore if I shoulde indeavour, by precepts and reasons, to reforme the abuse of the worlde, and to reduce it to the vertuous and auncient custome, I shoulde not onely loose my labour, but bee laughed at for my labour. Nowe as there are some thinges, which by reason of the abuse they are grown to, are not to bee followed, though they were at first taught us by good and wise maisters : so there are many thinges whiche of themselves beeing tollerable, yet either by the necessitie of the tyme, or by the sinceritie of our Religion, they are not to bee allowed. As for example, wee doe not any more forbidde children wyne, before they arrive to the age of eighteene yeeres : and the necessitie of the tyme will not let us to let men from marrying untill they bee sixe and thirtie yeeres olde, and maydes untill they bee eighteene : and to fulfill Gods commaundementes, after that man and woman are once joyned together by the bonde of marriage, they can not any way bee loosed, or seeke divorce uppon every light occasion, as in olde tyme they did, by the consent of the Philosophers : who if they were living at this day, woulde in many things reforme their wrytings, and conforme them to the customes of the present time. And for these reasons wee must treade out of the auncient path, and take the way which is beaten at this day. Wherefore you must not mervayle, nor lay it to mee as a deadly sinne, if in the discourse of civile conversation, I intreate rather of matters, which in my opinion are necessarie for the present tyme, then of matters written in Bookes, and used

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

in tyme past, and if I speake rather lyke a meere Citizen, then a Philosopher, without taking any care to get by my discourses those prayes and tytles which you have given me, which I neyther will nor ought to accept, beeing altogether unfit for me.

GUAZZO. The humilitie which you shewe in this respect doeth exault you higher: yet I dare say this much, that you doe your selfe wrong, to debase in suche sorte, the greate learning wherewith you are indued, assuring you this, that if I were so little inferiour to you in learning, as I knowe my selfe to bee a greate deale, I shoulde exault my selfe muche more then you doe.

ANNIB. If you were so much inferiour to mee, as I knowe you to bee greater, you shoulde commit a greater fault then I, to attribute so much to your selfe. For considering that I come nothing neere to that which you thinke to bee in mee, you shall offende in arrogancie and vaine glorie.

GUAZ. But in my minde, making your selfe meaner then you are, you offend in a certaine abjectnesse of minde, or in a kinde of dissembling, rather courtlike, then Philosopher like. I thinke you will not commend those, who having much understanding, stande little or nothing uppon it, or beeing known for woorthie men, seeke to imbase themselves * by bearing false witness against themselves.*

ANNIB. Truely I cannot but blame them: for to dispraise ones selfe too much, sheweth either some secret ambition, or some manifest basenesse of minde. And I count no lesse woorthie reprehension, those, who on the contrarie, exalting themselves too much, touch (as they say) the firmament with their finger. But I am sure, that in speaking at this present of my selfe, I have measured my forces, neither have I swarved one jote from the trueth.

GUAZZO. Seeing wee have fallen uppon this matter, tell mee I pray you, if you have any sure remedie, whereby a man may governe and keepe himselfe in the mid way, so that hee suffer not himselfe to be hoysed up into the ayre, like a ball full of winde, neither to fall deadly to the ground, as a body without breath.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. To finde then the skill of Dedalus, and to keepe the mid way, you must search out the cause of the faulty extreemes, and that being once knowen, you shall soone have the remedie you require. Those faults then growe for the most part of solitarinesse, and for want of experience in the affaires of the world. Which causeth, that into a base mind, there entreth the distrust of his owne doings, and the feare of other mens judgement. Contrariwise, that in a noble minde there groweth an over greate presumption, which transporteth him with an over weening of himselfe, and a course account of others. And therefore if these manner of men frequented the companie of those who are wise and learned, there is no doubt but that the doings of other men woulde serve, to the one of them for a spurre, and to the other for a bridle.

GUAZ. There are some doubtles woorthy great blame and mockery, who suffer those good parts, which bee in them, to bee drowned in their cold and timorous hearts, in like sort as stones are in the water. And I coulde name certaine eloquent personages, who having to speake in the presence of many, become quite dumbe. Some others I have knowen in like case ready to fall into a sowne. Whereby I judge them mervaylous unfortunate, that cannot helpe themselves with those qualities they are indued withall, at such tyme as they stande in most need of them, and better it were in a manner to be altogether without them.

ANNIB. It cannot be denied, but that those men are unfortunate, but let us nowe consider the arrogancie of those, who being full of presumption, and blinded with the love of themselves, see not their owne imperfections, and never care to knowe what opinion the worlde hath of them: Which is a signe not onely of presumptuous arrogancy, but also of sencelesse brutishnesse, whereof insue many inconveniences, for so much as according to the saying of a wise fellowe,

Great evill is caused by that ignorance,
which seemeth to it selfe sapience.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. It is a smal fault in my fancie, to desire to be taken to be wise, but the worst is, that we wil make our selves also beleeeve that wee are so.

ANNIB. Therefore it is sayde, that it is the easiest thing of all other, for one to deceive himselfe : and I remember I have read in the life of Esope, that a great personage passing thorowe a streete where were three slaves to bee solde, the one a Gramarian, the other a Musitian, and the thirde Esope : first hee asked the Gramarian what hee coulde doe, who answered, all things : then hee asked the Musitian the like question, who answered as the other did : but comming to Esope, hee asked him what hee coulde doe, who answered, nothing at all. Howe happeneth that, sayeth the Gentleman? Marie, sayth Esope, these twoo heere being able to doe all things, have left nothing for mee to doe. Whereby wee may see, that those who will not presume to bee able to doe any thing, knowe howe to doe most things, and those who take uppon them to knowe all things, are those which commonly knowe nothing at all. For so muche then as wee knowe, that for want of knowing and beeing experienced by meanes of conversation, in the natures, manners, and dooings of others, wee offende eyther by arrogancie, or by distrust, you may consequentlie perceive, that the remedie which you seeke to flye those extreemes, and to followe the meane, is civile conversation, and that chiefly which is practised out of the house, haunting many and divers persons, whereof wee have to speake this day.

GUAZ. I woulde have thought by those matters wee spoke of but now, that you had been farre of, from those wee are to intreate to day, but I see you have brought mee thyther before I thought of it ; whereat I mervayle the more, and I am gladder of it. But before you beginne this discourse, I woulde knowe whether your meaning bee, to propose one fourme and manner of conversation, whiche all indifferently should use, or at the least to assigne divers sortes, according to the diversitie of persons.

ANNIB. As farre as I remember, I tolde you yesterday,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

and nowe I tell you againe, that I meane to prescribe particularly to every one: For if in conversation all of us shoulde behave our selves in one sorte towards all, wee shoulde soone come to the chiefe point of our purpose. It is very true, there are some generall thinges which every one ought to observe towards every one indifferently, whereof also wee will use some speech, but my desire is chiefly, that wee come to consider the divers meanes which wee ought to use, in using companie, according to the diversitie of persons. Whereby wee shall knowe, that it is not so easie to finde one manner of entertainment common to all men, as it is to finde a fashion for a Sadle to fit any Horse. And thereby wee shal perceive, that as a man of good judgement, such as your selfe, writeth not in one selfe manner and wordes to his betters, equals, and inferiours, so wee in our conversation ought to proceed with the same judgement, to put difference betwene causes and parties which are not equall.

GUAZ. If then civile conversation ought to varie according to the varietie of the persons, I doubt mee least the rules, which you shall set downe, wilbe long and hard: for that we are driven by diverse accidentes to have to deale with diverse persons, differing in sexe, in age, in degree, in conditions, in country, and in nation.

ANNIB. You see in organes diverse pipes, whereof every one giveth a diverse sowne, yet they are all proportioned together, and make one onely bodie: in like sort, albeit there be diverse kindes of entertainemente and conversation, yet in the end we shall perceive that they agree together in such sort, that they seeme in a manner one onely sort, and perchaunce more easie then we thinke for. Wherefore to make the matter more easie, we will divide conversation into publike, which is abroad with strangers: and private, which is at home in the house. And for that both is more then we can dispatch to day, I thinke it shall suffice for this time to discourse onely of publike conversation, and the other we will reserve for to morrowe.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. I looked that you would first have spoken of this latter, for that by order of nature we begin conversation in the house with those that bee of houshold with us, and after, wee learne to converse abroad with others.

ANNIB. When in our yesterdayes discourse I proposed unto you conversation, as wel for the health of the minde, as the body, I meant of publike conversation, out of which especially the fruites and perfection wee have spoken of are gathered, and therefore to day wee will speake of that, which concerneth our principall purpose. Returning then to my discourse, I make good, that by meanes of civil conversation, a man may not onely cleere himselfe of cowardly abjection, and vaine presumption, but besides, cloath himselfe with the knowledge of himselfe. For if you consider it wel, the judgement which wee have to knowe our selves, is not ours, but wee borrow it of others : for so much as when wee are by divers persons advertised, blamed, reprov'd, or by signes made more advised for some fault, which wee commit either in word or deed, at the length we are content to submit our selves to the common opinion of al men, and come to acknowledge in our selves some imperfection, which wee indeavour to correct after other mens judgement. And though it bee harde to finde one that will tell us flatly the truethe, yet there is not any (at the least beeing a private person) so blinded in him selfe, but if hee bee faulty any way, by frequenting the companie of others, hee shall either have occasion offred him to examine his owne conscience, and so of him selfe to finde his owne fault, or else at one tyme or another, there shalbee one or other, whiche if not in way of good will, yet in manner of mockerie, or of scorne, or of spyte, or by one way or another, will make him to understande his fault. And as these same as it were against their wills are driven to amende their manners and life, so you see many of good judgement, and lesse overseene in themselves, who, without tarying untill they bee reprov'd of others, are mooved of their owne proper will, to waygh diligently the sayings, the dooings, and the behaviour of others. And as they learne

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

to eschue those things which they see to bee unseemely in any, so they indeavour to followe and appropriate to themselves those things whiche are commendable in others, so that by Conversation they become markers and imitators of wise men, and such as are patternes to bee practised by. To bee shorte, they frame themselves to doe, to leave, to chaunge, to correct many things according to the judgement of others. But seeing wee have alreadie at large discoursed, of the greate force, which universall opinions have for the amendement of our life, I will stande no longer uppon that point, and seeing wee are assured that our judgements, and the knowledge of our selves, dependeth of the judgement and conversation of many, I will enter to speake of the manner of conversation abroad: wherein, for the reasons and respectes wee alledged yesterday, I will have regarde to the common profite, and specially of those of small understanding, minding not to searche thorowly the morall vertues whiche every one can not comprehend, but to set forth onely the principall points, whiche are required in this conversation. Neyther will I in any wise mount to the toppe of trees, but satisfying in some parte so learned a man as you are, for the rest, I make account to speake to persons of weake capacitie, and therefore I will indeavour to present them with such thinges as are not out of their reach.

GUAZ. Your discourses shall so much the better content mee, by how much the more they shalbe familiar, and suche as are meete for the weakenesse of my understanding.

ANNIB. It is but your modestie to say so. Nowe coming first to the generall points, I am perswaded that the knowledge and contemplation of nature is imperfect in man, if actions bee not thereto adjoynd. And therefore if to students which live in contemplation, conversation bee necessarie, it is no doubt much more necessarie to those which have no learning at all: Who, that they may not remaine as brute beastes, but bee knowne to differ from them, ought to indeavour to learne that at the mouth of another, whiche by their owne studie they can not attaine

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

unto. Like as then it is reported, that certaine people used to dresse and heale those that were sicke openly in the streetes, and beeing carefull of their health, demaunded of those which passed by, if they knewe any remedie for their diseases : so the solitarie man, who is in very deepe sicke, and bereft of the knowledge whiche is gotten by the prooffe of other mens judgement, hath neede to seeke remedie abroad out of the house. And though perchance hee meete with some more sicke then himselfe, and with others perhaps incurable, yet let him not cease to goe forward, until such time hee finde such as are in health to comforte him, and Phisitions to heale him. Having respect to the sentence of him which saide, Of the wise thou shalt learne to make thy selfe better, of fooles, to make thy selfe more advised.

GUAZ. Though men were not induced to goe foorth of their house, and frequent the companie of others, for the causes by you alledged, yet I warrant you there want not other spurres, which pricke them forward into companie, and make them presse into places where they see the greatest throng of people : for the desire to maintaine and increase their wealth, and to mende their estate, will not suffer men to stande ydle with their handes at their gyrdels, whiche you shall plainely see, if you once set your foote in the Court of some Prince, where you shall see an infinite number of Courtiers assemble together, to talke and devise of many matters, to understande the newes of the death or confiscation of the goods of some one, to seeke to obtaine of the Prince, eyther promotions, goods, pardons, exemption, or priviledge for them selves or others : and before they will crave suche thinges, to proceede thereto by meanes, and to practise the favour of the Secretaries, and other Officers. And you shall have there besides, other good fellowes, conspiring together, and secretly devising howe to bring some Officer into the disfavour of his Prince, that hee may bee put from his office, and some other placed in his roome. And if this bee not ynough to give you to understande the pleasure whiche is received

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

by these companies, beholde the preasse of people whiche heapeth together at the judgement place, as oftentimes it hath been my happe to see in the great Palace of the Parliament of Paris, whiche sounding with an infinite number of voices, while the plaintiffe and the defendant pleade, seemeth to be shaken, as it were with an earthquake. But why alledge I forraine examples, let us passe only thorow the midst of this Citie, and wee shall see not only on dayes appointed for travaile, but on those also whiche are consecrated to the honour and service of God, a numberlesse multitude walking up and downe in every place, keeping a continuall mercate, where there is no other talke but of buying and selling, of chopping and chaunging, of letting and taking money to interest, and in summe, there is bargayning for all thinges, whiche are fit to heale the diseases of povertie, and to get the health of riches. And therefore there needeth not much labour to perswade men to love conversation, whereto they are naturally so given.

ANNIB. By this your speeche, you have brought to my remembraunce a place of Pythagoras, where hee sayde that this worlde was nothing else but a verie mercate, where there meete three sortes of men, the one to buy, the other to sell, and the thirde to looke on, who (hee sayde) were the Philosophers, whom hee counted the happiest of them all.

GUAZ. In Pythagoras tyme belyke there were no cut-purses which used the mercates, other wise he woulde have put them in amongst the other.

ANNIB. Another used likewise to say, that this world was a stage, wee the players whiche present the Comedie, and the gods, the lookers on, amongst whom belike hee comprehended the Philosophers. But for that at this day there are fewe divine lookers on, and that wee whiche are the players, are in a manner all of us given to play those partes whiche you have spoken of, I will propose unto you a kinde of conversation, not to stande us chiefly in steede in markets, Comedies, and other outwarde things subject to fortune, but to the ende wee may thereby learne good

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

manners and conditions, by meanes whereof, the giftes of fortune are distributed and conserved, and the favour and good will of others obtained.

GUAZ. It is your part then to shewe, howe those vertues and conditions may be learned.

ANNIB. Beeing so, that the solitary person is sicke, I prescribe for his health this medicine, that for a long tyme, hee indeavour by conversation to bring to passe, that the revenewes of his house bee farre greater then the expense.

GUAZ. Marie most men doe so: but mee thinkes in companie those whiche spende freely, are better thought of then those which spare niggardly. And if you call to remembrance, the doings used of olde tyme in Rome, you shall perceive that to gratifie, and give to many persons, was a meane whereby the love and good will of the people was gotten, and it served as a ladder, to climbe to the highest dignities and promotions.

ANNIB. A wise man beeing asked, why nature hath given us two eares, and but one tongue: to that ende (answered hee) that wee shoulde heare muche, and speake little. That answer gave mee occasion, to attribute to the eares, the revenewe, and to the tongue, the expence. And to the end I may bee better understoode, I say, that in conversation, the use of twoo things is chiefly requisite, that is, of our tongue, and of our behaviour: wherefore let us consider of those twoo parts.

GUAZ. Why will you restraine your selfe only to those two parts?

ANNIB. For that if you marke it well, wee winne chiefly the friendship and good will of other, by the manner of our speech, and by the qualitie of our conditions: yea I might in a certaine manner reduce al conversation, to that point of manners and behaviour, wherein are likewise comprysed our woordes and speech. But for so much as some parte of our talke doeth not wholly depende of manners and behaviour, I wil speake distinctly of those two points. And to enter into the matter, I say, that like as those

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

which are sicke in body, love and lust after those thinges,
which according to the saying of the Poet,

Are toothsome to the taste, but hindersome to health,

so the ignorant man of weake understanding, which hath neede to keepe silence, is mervaylously delighted to heare him selfe speake: and suche force hath this fault, that alwayes those whiche knowe least, covet to speake most. Seeing then to stay the tongue, and use the eare, are the hardest things that may bee, it behooveth our patient to frame him selfe to brydle his appetite, withstanding his owne will, and inuring himselfe by little and little, to keepe the mouth more shut, and the eares more open. Which hee shall no sooner doe, but hee shall perceive that in companie hee shall get the good will and favour of others, as well by giving eare courteously, as by speaking pleasantly. For wee thinke, they thinke wel of us, which are attentive to our talke, and wee see our pleasant speeche serveth us to no purpose, if it bee not hearde of others. Besides, our sicke man shall beginne by holding his peace, to recover his health, and to bee well thought of, of the wise. It was therefore that Pithagoras bounde his schollers to keepe silence, for the space of three yeeres, considering that by their diligent giving eare unto him, they shoulde bee advertised of their owne ignorance, and printing in their hearts the profoundnesse and gravitie of his sentences, they should feele the profite of their patience: according to the old saying, That to a diseased minde, the witty woordes of others serve for a Phisition: and in the end they shoulde know, that it is no lesse admirable, to knowe howe to holde ones peace, then to know how to speake. For, as wordes wel uttered, shewe eloquence and learning, so silence well kept, sheweth prudence and gravitie.

GUZ. I remember I have hearde tell, that one beeing asked, whether ignorance was the cause of his silence, answered: That it was incident alwayes to the ignorant, not to know how to be silent.

ANNIB. And therefore men of meane wit are the more

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

to bee commended, if they speake not much : Whereupon it is said, That it is a peece of wisdom for a man to hide his follie, by holding his tongue : and it is likewise sayd, That hee knoweth ynough, who knoweth nothing, if hee knowe how to holde his peace. Wee will then conclude, * that hee who knoweth not how to holde his peace, knoweth not howe to speake,* and hee that will learne to speake advisedly, must give eare to those which know howe to doe it, remembring that as hunger and thirst is an emptinesse of the body, so is ignorance an emptinesse of the minde : and as the body is filled with foode, so the minde is fedde with understanding : which as wee saide yesterday, is sooner gotten by hearing one speake, then by reading of bookes. And therefore hee ought to count it no labour to listen to others, nor shame to aske that which hee is ignorant in : but hee ought rather to imitate that worthie personage, who used to say, I question with everie man, but I answere no man, for that I knowe not how to frame a fit answere to anything.

GUAZ. I am not ignorant that it behoveth one without learning, to speake little, and heare much, and I knowe that by long observation of the sentences and discourses of others, hee must needes learne many things : but nowe you have taught him the profite hee is to make by brydling his tongue, I looke you shoulde set him downe the charges hee is to be at, in speaking.

ANNIB. As money well imploied, turneth both to the commoditie of him that receiveth it, and likewise of him that disburseth it : so woordes well considered, bring profite to the hearer, and prayse to the speaker. And as out of one purse are drawn diverse kindes of coyne, as of golde, silver, and baser mettall : so out of the mouth proceede sentences and woordes of different value. But as it is not lawfull to forge or pay out naughtie mony, so neither is it lawfull to invent, or speake that thing whiche may turne to the prejudice or reproche of others : For by such forgerie a man not onely shameth himselfe, but besides, putteth his own life in daunger, which together with his

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

death, is in the power of the tongue. Moreover, it is written that *the tongue is a little fire, which kindleth greate matters,* and that he which keepeth and represseth his tongue, keepeth his owne soule. Wherefore we have to conclude, that hee which wisheth to bee well spoken of by others, must take heede hee speake not ill of others. Therefore let him who hath his tongue in his mouth, bee at this point, that though he can not utter grave and delightfull speeches, like unto Philosophers and Oratours, who are very scant in the worlde, yet hee speake honestly and plainly, as an honest and Christian man ought to doe, *remembring alwayes that it is better to slip with the foote, then with the tongue.*

GUAZ. As I thinke, I have read that a king of Egypt, to proove the judgement of Solon, sent him a beast to sacrifice, injoyning him to choose out that part of the beast which he judged best, and that which hee judged worst, to sende backe unto him. Solon to accomplish the kings hestes, sent him only the tongue.

ANNIB. And therefore the tongue is rightly compared to the sterne of a shippe, which beeing the least parte of it, yet is it of force to save or sinke the shippe. But of those which put the shippe in daunger of drowning, and which by the venome of their mischievous tongues procure hurte to others, and blame to themselves, wee spake yesterday sufficiently, in so much that wee have already excluded them out of the number of the good and desirable: wherefore those which aspire to the degree of vertue, and which will shewe themselves woorthie to bee admitted into civile conversation, ought above all things to have regarde that they offende no man with their tongue. But they shall not bee quite discharged of their debt, if besides that, they doe not with their woordes, seeke to profite and delight their hearers both together, to the ende they may reape all the fruite which the tongue can yeelde: For that the tongue by instructing, conferring, disputing, and discoursing, doth gather, assemble, and joyne men together with a certaine naturall bonde. Hee then that will behave

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

himselfe wel in civile conversation, must consider that the tongue is the mirrour, and (as it were) the image of his minde. And that like as wee knowe goodnesse or naughtinesse of mony, by the sounde of it: so by the sounde of woordes, we gather the inwarde qualities and conditions of the man. And for that wee are so much the more esteemed of, by howe muche our Civilitie differeth from the nature and fashions of the vulgar sorte, it is requisite that wee inforce our tongue to make manifest that difference in two principall thinges: in the pleasant grace, and the profounde gravitie of woordes.

GUAZ. I understande you, your meaning is, that as the poore people spende nothing but liards, and other such lyke small monye, so hee whom you speake of, shoulde use no other mony but gold, which is the fairest in shewe, and best in substance. Yet (if I bee not deceived) you are contrary to your selfe, for you tolde mee not long since, that it was ynough to use plaine and simple speeche, and nowe you will have him speake with eloquence and wisdom. But seeing you have saide that there are amongst us but fewe Orators and Philosophers, howe shall I, and such as I am doe, that have no golde to spende, and who can not in companie be either Demosthenes or Plato? Is it your minde wee shall returne to the schoole, to learne Rhetorike and Philosophy?

ANNIB. I will never unsay, that I have once said, but I make good, that a man ought to proceede in common talke simply and plainly, according as the truth of the matter shal require: notwithstanding, if you consider how in Villages, Hamlets, and fields, you shall finde many men, who though they leade their life farre distant from the graces and Muses (as the proverb is) and come stamping in with their high clouted shooes, yet are of good understanding, whereof they give sufficient testimonie by their wise and discreete talke: you cannot denie, but that nature hath given and sowed in us certaine seedes of Rhetorike and Philosophie. But for that the more those good partes appeare in a man, the better hee is accepted in all companies,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

I would have him aide nature with a little art, and seeke to furnish himself with such good giftes, that he make himselfe place, bee desired, honoured, and esteemed in any honest companie hee shall come in.

GUAZ. Yea Syr, but take heede least eloquence bee not counted natural, by divers woorthy persons, yea and it is much misliked of, when it swarveth from the common phrase and fourme of speech, which we use with wife, children, servantes and friendes. For that wee ought to be content to expresse our minde without affectation, without paine, and without any pompe : For if any of those be added, it is besides the trueth, and sheweth a superfluitie of woordes, whose proper office ought to bee only to utter our conceived meaning. And in trueth, wherefore serve so many peraphrases and circumlocutions, so many translations and figures, beeing able to set forth matters, and touche them brieflie, in proper and plaine termes. In my minde it may be saide, that these professours of eloquence, under the colour of an Oratour, playe the parte of a Poet : and by the feigning of woordes, shewe the little plaine dealing that is in them.

ANNIB. To make you answere, I must aske you this question, whether you thinke the men of olde time to have spoken better, or these of our time ?

GUAZ. These of this age in my fansie, for that it is easie to bewtifie and amplifie things, when they are once brought in.

ANNIB. I am of your minde, for that in times paste they had not suche rules to direct them in speaking, as now adayes are set downe : they had not such Art and Methode, nor suche meane to helpe them selves with Proemes, or by disposing and deviding of their matters, or by proving them by places and argumentes : but for all this, you must not thinke but that our manner of speaking is as naturall as theirs was.

GUAZ. I count it naturall, for so muche as the rude speeche of the countrie Clowne, is as naturall to him, as the fine and polished, is to the Citizen and Gentleman.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. You see then everie thing to be naturall, which nature consenteth to have made better and more perfect : and therefore as it is a thing unseemely and unnaturall in talke to straie to farre from fit and usuall matters, so it can not but be commended and saide to bee naturall, when in ones talke to necessarie thinges somewhat is added, whereby the matter is amended. And for so muche as all men naturally indeavour them selves in speeche, to persuade and to moove, it is certaine that a sentence hath so much the more or lesse force and vigour, according to the difference of persons from whom it commeth, and of the words by which it is uttered. So that our chiefe labour must bee to moove the heartes of the hearers : and wee must weigh this, that nothing can enter into their hearts, which is not currantly spoken, and without offence to the eares : and therefore wee must labour to have (as Bias saide) a comely grace in holding our peace, and a lively force in speaking.

GUAZ. If then your meaning be wee shoulde moove affections, and persuade mens mindes with the tongue, you can not chuse but you must have recourse to the preceptes of Rhethorike, which are not for every mans capacitie.

ANNIB. I thinke it neither necessary nor convenient in this place to speake of those preceptes, because I will not seeme desirous to take the penne out of the hande of those which write of eloquence, which were nothing els but to seeke to take the lightning from Jupiter.

GUAZ. Hee which can speake by art, as you can, muche more easily shall hee bee able to discourse of art when neede shall require.

ANNIB. But being not in me to discourse of art, I shall lesse be able to speake by art. But admit I could doe both the one and the other, wee have alreadie agreed, not to meddle with those matters which every one can not understand. Wherefore touching that point, I will do no otherwise then discreete Phisitions are accustomed to doe, who having respect to the povertie of some of their Patientes, heale them not with Rubarbe, Manna, or other costly

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

medicines, but in steede thereof, woorke their cure with hearbes and simples, and suche remedies as without paine or charge are commonly to be founde in everie felde, house, and Gardeine. So likewise, the most part of men being sicke, and so deprived of understanding, that they are not able to attaine to those high and profound secrets, which are as it were in the marow and pith of the institutions of Rethorike, we will laye before them those things, which at the least grow about the Barke. For though they bee not of great price, yet neverthelesse they shall be of great profite to the diseased. I say then, that our tongue shall bring foorth wordes which shall have force to stirre up mens mindes, and in goodlinesse and goodnesse, both they shall represent that gold wherof wee have made mention, so that there be a little labour bestowed in the action, jesture, and pronouncing of the woordes, which hath great force and power in speeche. And albeit the orations of Demosthenes are full of eloquence and wit, yet it is saide, That in Demosthenes there lacketh the greatest parte of Demosthenes: for that they are not lively pronounced, but set downe to bee read in dead letters. And verily I have knowne many so delightfull in their discourses, notwithstanding they have been vaine and to small purpose, that by the sweete and pleasant deliverie and pronouncing of their speech, they have gotten the commendation to bee able to speake verie well.

GUAZ. Many Courtiers carie that litle peece of suger in their mouthes, and it may bee saide, that their money seemeth to bee Golde, although in the touche it is found to bee silver, or baser mettall. But I am of opinion in this, that wee suffer our eares to bee too muche tickled, whereby wee give wrong judgement of the matter, beeing more attentive to the sounde of the woordes, then to the waight of the sentences, giving the tytle of Oratour, to suche a one as is but a brabler, and altogether without learning.

ANNIB. I am fully of your minde, and thereof it commeth, that many times certaine verses like us verie well, and seeme to be set foorth with all the pleasant vaine of Poetry,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

when we heare some tumbler or Dauncer sing them to the Harp, but if you come to read them afterwards, you will think them sottish and vaine. The like befalleth to many others, who in speaking are verie well liked of, and no fault to be founde in them, but let them come to writing any thing, and they are no bodie. But that we have no mervayle heereof, I must say unto you, that those same persons are not in deede eloquent, but that all their force and vertue lieth in the sweete deliverie of their wordes, which though they bee neither well placed, neither verie pithie or sententious, yet they make to the eares and the minde a most delightfull Harmonie, which possesseth us in such sorte, that wee neither searche after, nor desire for any thing besides.

GUAZ. Then it is no mervayle on the contrarie, that many knowe how to use pure and fine filed speeche, and yet want the gift of pronuntiation, which is so yl in them, that thereby their woordes loose their grace and authoritie. But for so muche as this parte of action hath force to make men esteemed of above their desertes, I shoulde bee verie glad if you woulde shewe mee wherein consisteth this vertue.

ANNIB. Seeing the other good parts, which are in you, are accompanied with this same also, I can not beleieve but you knowe well enough by what meanes you have gotten it.

GUAZ. I knowe not howe I may beleieve, that you beleieve so, for I knowe that I never learned any precept of Rethorike.

ANNIB. You are the more happie to have attained to that without travayle, which others can not come to, with much studie.

GUAZ. Doe you not knowe that he is not happie, which doeth not knowe him selfe to be happie.

ANNIB. Though you are ignorant of the partes of this action, yet you knowe in your selfe the gift of good delivery of speech, and that you possesse that gift. And for my part I confesse unto you, I have not bestowed muche studie about those pointes. But if your pleasure be, that we shal

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE roave at them, perchaunce we shall come neare the marke
SECOND of the Authours of Rethorike.

BOOKE GUAZ. Even as it shall please you. .

ANNIB. I consider first of all, that the first part of action consisteth in the voice, which ought to measure its forces, and to moderate it selfe in suche sort, that though it straine it selfe somewhat, yet it offend not the eares by a rawe and harshe sownde, like as of stringes of instrumentes when they breake, or when they are yll stricken.

GUAZ. To say the trueth, that is the pronuntiation of the most part of our Monferins, and muche more of those of Piemount, who with the shrilnesse of their wordes goe thorow ones eares.

ANNIB. Yet wee must take heede we speake not so softly that we can scarce be heard.

GUAZ. That is the voyce of Hypocrites, and our holy Ankers, who seeme to speake with the mouth of death.

ANNIB. Nexte, wee must take heede to bring forth our woordes distinctly, and to separate the sillables : mary in suche sorte that wee set not foorth everie letter, as litle children doe when they learne to reade, which is a verie unpleasant hearing.

GUAZ. The people of Verona and Venice, seeme to erre in that.

ANNIB. But on the other side, it is not meete to utter ones wordes in suche hast, that like meate, in the mouth of one almost starved, they bee swallowed downe without chewing.

GUAZ. It is used of the Genowayes and those of Corza.

ANNIB. And therefore it is necessarie to use a meane, that the pronuntiation be neither too swift nor too slow. But we must take heede above all thinges, that the last sillables be heard plainly, least we fall into the fault of some, who suffer the last letters to die betweene their teeth. Like as he who for feare to say amisse, durst bring foorth neither Tempum nor Tempus, but Temps, and therefore wee must speake freely, without supping up our woordes, and bringing them but halfe foorth.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. Lovers commonly use such uncertaine and broken speeches.

ANNIB. We must likewise take heede we speake not out of the throate, like one that hath some meate in his mouth which is too hotte, or els is almost choaked with the reume.

GUAZ. This is the imperfection of the Florentines and those of Luqua : who have their throates full of aspirations.

ANNIB. Some others offende as muche, who opening their mouth too muche, fill it with winde, and make the woordes resowne within, as an Eccho doeth in Caves and hollowe places.

GUAZ. As I think, that is the natural custome of those of Mantua and Cremona, wherin those of Naples also keepe them company.

ANNIB. Lastly, the voyce must be neither fainte like one that is sicke, or like a begger : neither shrill nor loud like a crier, or like a schoolemaister, which doeth dictate or rehearse to his scholers some theame or epistle. For it would be saide, as it was saide to one, If thou singest, thou singest yll, if thou readest, thou singest.

GUAZ. I doe not thinke for all that, you woulde have us in speaking use alwayes one tune and measure.

ANNIB. No verily, for the pleasure of speech, so wel as of Musicke, proceedeth of the chaunge of the voyce, yea, (to ende this talke) I woulde have you know, that as we sometimes stande, sometimes walke, sometimes sit, without continuing long in either of them, so the change of the voice, *like an instrument of divers strings,* is verie acceptable, and easeth both the hearer and the speaker : and yet we must see that this change be made with discretion in time and place, according to the qualitie of the woordes, and the diversitie of the sentences and sayinges.

GUAZ. As far as I see, you have nothing els to say touching this action.

ANNIB. No more touching the voyce, but there is an other parte, which pertaineth to the jesture, whereof

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

perchaunce it were better to say nothing, then speake too litle, for that there belong unto it so many circumstances, that for my part I am not able to rehearse them.

GUAZ. It is muche in my opinion to keepe a certaine majestie in the jesture, which speaketh as it were by using silence, and constraineth as it were by way of commaundement the hearers, to have it in admiration and reverence.

ANNIB. Yet herein is required such a moderation, that a man with too litle be no immoveable like an image, neither with too much, too busie like an Ape: and as the one stirring no parte, thinking to get the opinion of gravitie, incurreth the suspition of folly, and is taken for a feigned person, brought in to speake, having of him selfe no life, so the other by the libertie of his jestures, thinking to use a plausible kinde of curtesie, whereby to winne favour, speaketh a playerlike kinde of lightnesse, whereby hee getteth discommendation. I will not in this place advise him that speaketh to holde his head upright, to take heede of licking or byting the lippes, and to see the woordes agree to the jesture, as the daunce doeth to the sowne of the instrument: neither likewise doe I thinke it meete to admonishe the hearer to take heede of rude lowtish looks, of wrying the bodie aside, of too set a gravitie in looks, of too sower a countenaunce, of gazing about him, of whispering in any others eare, of laughing without occasion, of gaping too wide, of shewing him selfe greeved at the speakers wordes, and of all those thinges whereby you may either amaze him that speaketh, or els seeme to bee wearie of his talke. I will not, I say, speake of these thinges, for I should but make a recitall of Galatee, and those bookes, whiche the morall Philosophers and Rhetoritians have written uppon this matter. These are thinges whiche are learned, not so muche by readyng, as by using company, for when an other speaketh, wee marke what liketh and what disliketh, and by that wee knowe what we ought to avoyde and what to followe: as when wee our selves speake, and that wee see some of the hearers litle attentive, or some other way to use some yll behaviour, wee learne

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

by his incivillitie how we ought to behave our selves in hearing others. It shall suffice then to say for this time, that touching this action, wee must frame all the bodie in suche sort, that it seeme neither to bee of one whole immoveable lumpe, neither yet to bee altogether loosely disjoyned.

GUAZ. That is, wee must imitate those which neither Saintlike are too ceremonious, neither Jugglerlike are too quicke and too full of action.

ANNIB. Just. But above all, it behooveth him, which by his action is willing to moove an other, to feele first some motions in him selfe, and to drawe forth the affections of his heart, in suche sort, that the hearers seeing them shew without the eyes, may be mooved by the verie countenance of him that speaketh.

GUAZ. This same in my judgement is one of the best and necessariest advertisementes which you have hyther unto given: for that the ende of the speaker, being to stirre up the affections of others, hee ought to take paine in it. And it can not be that you shoulde bee sorowfull for my mishap, if while I recount it unto you, you perceive not me to be sorowfull. Neither can I possibly wring the teares from your eyes, unlesse I first wipe them from mine owne. To be short, one thing can not give to an other that which it selfe hath not. And I say againe, that this is a notable precept: whereby you put mee in minde of some persons whom I knowe happily indowed with this gift. And amongst other, my Lorde the most reverend Archbishop of Thurin, Seigneur Hierosme de la Rovere, who, by his learning, eloquence, good conversation and godly life, began even from his infancie to make all men have him in admiration, and to bee very well thought of in all companies hee commeth in, and yet hee is become so expert in this action, which you have proposed, that not only by his sweete, filed, grave, and distinct words: but also by the windowes of his eyes, by the clearenesse of his countenance, and by the seemelynesse of his gestures, hee doeth so open within his commendable affections, that on

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

the one side, and the other, hee carryeth away mens heartes whither it pleaseth him.

ANNIB. You see then, that the inwarde action ought to goe before the outwarde, so that the sounde of the wordes, and the motions of the body, bee thrust forward by the affections of the heart. * And of all this our discourse, wee may gather this, that there is as well eloquence of body, as of mind, and that many are counted eloquent, for some or for only one part of Rethorike, which is justified by the example of Apuleius, who was judged most eloquent, for his countenance, gesture, and comely mooving of the body, with the which good partes, hee more allured his auditours, then with copie of wordes. It is saide further, that Hortensius tooke more paines in trimming up his body, then in framing of his speache : so that it was doubtfull whether men ranne rather to beholde him, then to heare him. So great agreement is there betweene the words and the countenance, and the countenance and the wordes.* Now for so much as wee have saide, and concluded, as much as is sufficient touching the tongue, it is requisite wee come to those partes which consist in manners : and as hytherto wee have intreated of the bewtie of golde, nowe wee must consider of the value of it.

GAZ. You have in few wordes so well satisfyed mee touching Action, that nowe you make mee desirous to heare some other point touching talke. And as that which you have hetherunto said, concerneth only the pronuntiation of wordes, and the gestures of the body, so I woulde bee very glad it might now please you to speake of those points, which appertaine to the ornament and bewtifying of speach : which discourse wyll not exceede the capacitie of men of meane understanding.

ANNIB. I have already tolde you that wee must not climbe up that great tree, to gather the fruites which are on the top of it, for that we shall have much to do to get thither, and fewe there bee that will bee able to followe us : and wee ought to thinke our selves wel, that wee have reached with our handes, those fewe leaves, and flowers

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

which hang over our head. And for that the chieftest vertue is to abstaine from vice, I first admonishe him, which taketh pleasure in civile conversation, to eschewe all things which make the talke lesse delightfull to the hearers: as, to use more briefenesse then is requisite, for the plain setting foorth of the matter hee hath undertaken to speake of, which troubleth much the hearers. For as if they were juditially to examine an offendour, they shall bee driven by continuall demaundes forcibly to wring foorth of his mouth those things, which (to explaine the matter thoroughly) hee ought to utter without asking. But on the other side, hee must not use superfluous wordes, nor bee tedious to his hearers with long Prefaces, and other impertinent circumstances besides the matter, whiche sheweth him a vaine trifler, without judgement, and maketh him nothing acceptable to his Auditors.

GUAZ. By many wordes many imperfections are discovered, and as a wise man saide, If to have the tongue still walking and jabbering were a signe of wisdom, the Swallowes might verily bee saide to bee more sage then us.

ANNIB. * Thereupon it is that the lawmaker, being asked why hee ordeined so fewe lawes for the Lacedemonians, answered: That a fewe lawes were enough for those that used but fewe wordes.* But those which use varietie, and intreate of divers matters, though they use many wordes, yet they weary not their hearers, so much as those doe, who according to the Proverbe, Make of the flie, an Elephant, and of a matter of nothing, a long tale, * which Agesilaus finding fault with, saide hee liked not of that Shoemaker, which made a great shooe for a little foote.* There are many other imperfections of speache, which I will not rehearse, for that hee whiche giveth attentive eare, shall bee well able to discerne, and knowe them in him who speaketh yll. I will say that amongst other faultes, there is one common to the most part of men, who by negligence use to repeate some one worde verie often: and some there are, who speaking by the mouth of another, rehearse often this (sayth hee) which is very unseemely. Another at the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

beginning of every sentence, commeth in with (nowe Syr) : and some there are, who when they will not or can not signifie thinges by their proper names, in steede thereof say (what shal I call it).

GUAZ. The first faulte of these last rehearsed, is very unseemely for him which speaketh, but much more for him which writeth, and I have noted, that many having some speciall affection to some woorde, or to some manner of speache, have sowed it in a thousande places, and in every leafe of their booke coulde not refraine from continuall repetition of the same wordes, or phrases of speache. And therefore there are, whiche say, the writings of Bembo woulde have better grace, if these wordes (*Paventenole, fortunevole*, and suche like) were not so often inserted in them, whiche gave occasion to the Cardinall Farnese to say jestingly, as hee behelde a house at Bologne, built with many windowes, *Questa casa secundo il Bembo é molto fenestrevole.*

ANNIB. Wee must in our talke take heede of those faultes, and others suche like, other advertisementes which I can at this time give, touching the commendable pointes in talke, are that every one indeavour to expresse the thinges whereof hee speaketh, so plainely, that hee maketh them seene and touched, as it were with the finger, using wordes proper, significant, and of efficacie.

GUAZ. I count him most happy which hath that grace, and I knowe some Gentlemen so mervellous in that point, that they wil force their hearers, to receive pleasure and dolour, to laugh and weepe, according to the qualitie of their discourses : by the which (like Orphee and Amphion) they will drawe them whither pleaseth them. But I knowe not whether you have marked some, who on the other side, labouring to speake plainly and effectually, become more obscure and lesse delightfull, whereby it commeth to passe, which is saide, that by too much spurring, the horse is made dull.

ANNIB. That fault commeth of affectation, which is above all things to bee avoyded, as a thing odious and

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

fruitlesse : and you know wel that to those which give eare to their owne wordes, it happeneth as to those, who the more they force themselves to beholde the Sunne, the more they make their eyes runne on water : And therefore it behooveth every one to measure his forces, and to know that a man ought to speake no better then hee can.

GUAZ. I have tried in my selfe that to bee most true which you say, and I have noted some, who the more they strived to shewe themselves, the more did they overthrowe themselves, verifying the saying of the Poet,

He which will climbe too high,
doth seeke to catch a fall :
What God hath given to man, let him
content himselfe withall.

ANNIB. Moreover, sometimes suche matters come in talke, wherein negligent carelesnesse in wordes, is more acceptable then diligent curiousnesse : and nowe and then common and familiar wordes, set foorth the matters which are handled, farre better then Tragicall and stately words doe. I mainteine not for all this, that a man neede take no care howe hee speaketh : for it is a thing as blame worthie to speake dissolutely, as to speake difficultlie : and it is as great a fault in common and knowne matters to use curious affectation, as it is in great and waightie matters to shewe himselfe negligent, and void of consideration. Wherefore a man of good judgement will knowe howe to flie these extreames, and to use in time and place, wordes and sentences, either more or lesse grave, according to the diversitie of places, times, matters, and persons, to whom hee shall speake : which likewise writers use to observe in their workes. But in any wise I advise him to bestowe more paine about the sense, then the wordes : for that most commonly in busying his braine about the vaine pompe of wordes, hee doeth not conceive the matter so well, nor contrive it in such order, as hee ought to doe : and with Esopes Dogge, letteth fall the fleshe, to catche the shadow.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

And wee must make account, that as the guest feedeth not himselfe with the smoke of the meate, nor the Host payeth himselfe with the sowne of the money, so the hearer doeth not content him selfe only with the smoke or sowne of goodly wordes. To bee short, goodly wordes without good sense, are not wordes, but rather trifles.

GUAZ. * I thinke there are fewe able to attaine to the excellencie of Focion, who is saide to use few wordes, containing in them muche matter: as if hee shoulde compare wordes to mony, which is so muche the more esteemed, by how muche lesser it is in quantitie, and greater in value.

ANNIB. This is, no doubt, a rare and singuler gift, but hee which cannot attaine to it, ought at the least to knowe, that unpolished wisdom is more commended, then flourishing filed speache, voide of wit. And as in money wee doe not chiefly consider the fourme, and the stampe, but the weight, and the matter whereof it is made, so in speach wee ought not to looke so much to the grace and finesse of it, as to the gravitie and goodnesse of it.* And for that there are many which are of very good devise, who in wordes are not able well and readily to expresse it, I woulde wishe him, which in civile conversation seeketh to winne favour and commoditie, that having not himselfe learned of Oratours, the places from whence are drawn the varietie and copie of words, figures, and elocution, whereby the speach is bewtified and set foorth, at the least hee diligently give care to the wordes of others, and thinke with him selfe, that there is not any so fond, or so barren in his speach, but that sometime he saith something worthie of memorie, which ought to gather as a rose amongst thornes, and lay it up for his owne use. And albeit these same ornaments and flowers of speache growe up chiefly in the learned, yet you see that nature maketh some of them to flourish even amongst the common sort, unknowing unto them: and you shall see artificers, and others of low estate, to apply fitly to their purpose in due time and place, Sentences, pleasant Jestes, Fables, Allegories, Similitudes, Proverbes, Comptes, and other delightfull speache, varying from the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

common fourme of talke, whiche hath no small force to content the hearers. And therefore as wee have saide alreadie, it is needefull to aide our selves with a litle Art. For to set downe thinges alwaies in those bare and simple termes, which our mother hath taught us, and to followe ever their plaine propertie, doeth but weary the hearer, who on the contrarie, is recreated and delighted with varietie, and those figurative speeches, which are not common to every one. And though it bee more then I neede to doe, to illustre this, which I have spoken with examples, yet (more to satisfie my selfe then you) I will rehearse one. Hee which in wordes and outward shew pretendeth us great good will, and in his heart wisheth and worketh us yll, may bee signified, and set foorth by us with this onely worde (Dissembler) yet you shall heare some fine head (refusing to use that common worde, whiche very infants understande) which will tearme him a wolfe clothed in a sheepes skin. Another will say, that in the likenesse of a Dove, hee caryeth the taile of a Scorpion: or, that he hath Honie in his mouth, and a Razor at his girdle. Another will call him a painted Sepulchre, sugred pilles, or gilted copper. Another will say, hee maketh shewe of the cuppe, but giveth blowes of the cudgell: or, that hee weepeth over his Stepmothers grave. Some will crye, beware your legges, or will say, that he offereth you bread with one hand, and throweth a stone at you with another.

GUAZ. A man may also apply unto him the verse of the Poet,

That in the fayrest flowers and grasse,
the serpent most doeth lurke.

ANNIB. We may then thereby knowe, that to trimme up our speech, and to goe an ace beyonde the common sort, it is good to accustome our selves to those pretie and pleasant kinde of speeches.

GUAZ. We must not then blame the diligent industry of some, who like unto Bees, gather hony of divers flowers: and not suffering one word, sentence, or mery jest, spoken

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

by others, to fall to the ground, write them in their tables, to the intent to use them themselves afterwarde eyther in speaking or writing.

ANNIB. I rather commend them, for that it is the way to get reputation with little charge, and I likewise commend those, who to store themselves more plentifully, reade comedies and other posies, from which they fetch many thinges to the same effect.

GUAZ. Here it commeth in my head to tell you, that above al (in my judgement,) they are best liked of in company, to whom God hath given the grace to be able to discourse wel and readily of every thing. For as the spring time doeth marveylously delight the eies with the sundrie sorts of flowers which it bringeth foorth, so these same by the diversitie and varietie of their discourse, give woonderful refreshment to our mindes.

ANNIB. * I count those, which wil undertake to speake of every matter, rather venturous then learned : and I have knowne some yong men so greedy of knowledge, that they have devoured all sortes of booke without chewing them, and according to the nature of cold stomakes, which desire more then they are able to digest, have crammed in great abundance of learning, whiche for lacke of good digestion yeeldeth no nourishment : and while they have gone about, being amongst learned men, to seeme at one time Orators, Poets, Philosophers, and Divines, they have scarce shewed themselves sufficient Gramarians. And therefore you must think, that though they commonly make men have them in admiration, and take delight in their companie, yet they are confused in themselves, and altogether without order, not unlike a painters aterne, which you shall see spotted by chaunce with al kinde of coloures. And this their learning, more diverse then deepe, may in neede (as you say) be likened to the flowers of spring time,* for that it is not come to Autumne, neither hath gathered the ripe fruites of the right sciences : every one of which will aske the studie of a mans whole life. So that it is a matter impossible for any man to discourse perfectly of every thing,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

and wee may say, that these men follow the Poet in that verse,

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

I holding nothing fast, of all thinges fasten holde.

Which is likewise agreeable to the Proverbe, That he is not any where, who is every where. Yet for my part, I doe not reprehend these men, but rather commend them, as wel for that they have not aspired hereto without studie, or at least without frequenting the companie of the learned, as also for that * by those their mingle mangles,* they win the liking and good opinion of a great many that they shal come in companie withall. * But I will say thus much unto you, that is a most commendable course for a prince to take, whom perchaunce it better beseemeth to have superficial sight in diverse languages and sciences, then to be deeplie seene in one onely. For many people of diverse nations and professions, having many important occasions of dealing with him in person, it seemeth meete for his majestie (not so much for an ornament to himself, as an universal benifit) to have of all thinges, if it be possible, a certaine superficial knowledge. Provided alwayes, that his principall care and studie be to governe and rule his subjects, as he ought to doe: that it may not be sayd of him, as of Nero, who was very desirous (though he nothing deserved it) to be counted an excellent musition: wherupon it was saide that he was every other thing more then a musition, and yet more a musition then a prince. But for private persons, I am flat of this opinion, * that hee which seeketh to reache the very toppe and type of glory, must rather get him downe to the roote of some one science onely, then gather heere and there the fading flowers of many,* remembring alwayes this saying: That to runne over divers things slightly, delighteth: but to reade over fewe things advisedly, profiteth.

GUAZ. I perceive by you, you are desirous to come to other matters: yet I beseech you to cleere mee of one doubt more touching the tongue, and to shewe mee whether you thinke good, that every one use the common language of his

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

owne Countrie, or els affect the Tuscan tongue, as the better and finer.

ANNIB. You drive mee to speake of a matter, wherein swarving somewhat from the opinion of others, I shal perchaunce purchase to my selfe the tytle of arrogancie : neverthesse, I consider that the varietie of opinions, whiche have any grounde of reason, cannot justly bee misliked. And therefore as you shall doe mee no wrong to gainesay that which I say unto you, seeing it commeth not from the Oracle of Apollo, so I thinke I shal not any way injurie others, if I nowe freely say unto you, that I have alwaies been of opinion, that every one speake according to the manner of his owne countrie : which, who so leaveth, to take up any other fashion of speache, is no lesse to blame then they which renounce, and refuse the Countrie it selfe. For it is to bee considered, that after the first confusion of tongues, many sortes of languages have by the divine power of God remained in the worlde : whereby not onely one Nation was knowne from another, but also one Countrie, one Citie, one Village, and (which is more) one streete from another.

GUAZ. I thinke verily that it cannot bee saide with reason, that I leave my countrie, but rather that I love it, and am carefull for it, deserving to bee well thought of of everie one, if I indeavour in speaking to avoyde the grosse rudenesse of the Montserrat tongue, to reduce and conforme it to the puritie of the Tuscan tongue, and to stirre uppe others to followe mee, so that it may become our owne proper language.

ANNIB. So long as you shall betake your selfe to that manner of speeche, and no man els take it up, your language shall not merite the name and title of Countrie language, but rather of forraine, and you shall rather bee mocked for it, then commended. But if you alone coulde bryng to passe (whiche seemeth to mee a matter impossible) that the amendment and reformation by you introduced, might bee allowed and followed by others, then no doubt but you shoulde deserve commendation of everie one. For then

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

that language shoulde bee no longer strange, but our owne properly: whereof certaine new fashions in apparrell, taken up not long since, give us an example, whiche coming from Spaniardes and other Strangers, are at this day made our owne by proprietie, which falleth out likewise in speeche. For not onely this our corrupt language of Montserrat, but even the Tuscan tongue likewise hath received certaine wordes (as you knowe better then I) both French and Provenciall, and hath so well appropriated them, that they are taken for Tuscan. And who knoweth not that by reason of the concourse of the Mantuans hyther, within this little while wee have given course to certaine speeches, woordes, and accents come from them, which leaping from mouth to mouth, at length are made common to every man? Whereby like fishes comming from the ryver Garda or Mince, they swimme in great abundance into this ryver. And wee shall see also heereafter, that the diversitie of people, which is come to place them selves in this Citie, wil, by the mixture of so many tongues, have chaunged in divers wordes, the speech used at this day.

GUAZ. Then your meaning is, that I ought to speake after the abuse of our countrie.

ANNIB. Yea in deede is it.

GUAZ. To what end then have I bestowed labour in the Tuscan tongue?

ANNIB. Mary to this purpose, to set downe well in writing, but your owne minde, and the will and pleasure of the Prince your Maister.

GUAZ. If it bee lawefull for mee to write Tuscan like, why shall it not bee lawfull likewise for mee to speake Tuscan like?

ANNIB. For that all men commonly delight to write, as men ought to doe, and to speake as men use to doe: and though they binde themselves to a right order in writing, yet they are content in speaking to follow the common usage.

GUAZ. If you did marke, as I have doone, the delight whiche these Citizens take to heare Senior Mola the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

President speake the right Tuscan tongue, sweetened with the pleasant Roman tongue, I am sure, you would allowe mee and other also to speake the Tuscan tongue.

ANNIB. That whiche beseemeth him, were unseemely for you, and in using it, you shoulde make your selfe as much misliked, as he is liked. For hee hath remained in those partes long time, even from his youth, where hee hath learned the language in suche sorte, that it cannot bee saide, that in his house hee speaketh a straunge or affected language : which would bee saide of you, who having made no abode in those same Countries, you cannot excuse your selfe, that by long use you cannot speake otherwise : where-by you must thinke that hee speaketh so of necessitie, where you shoulde speake upon pleasure, to content your owne fansie, or els uppon a braverie, to shewe your skill. And like as it is reported, that while the Astrologer made a discourse of the movinges of the celestiall Spheres, and course of the starres, a Philosopher interrupting him, scoffingly demaunded of him, how long it was since hee came from heaven : so a man might ask you, how long it is since you returned from Tuscan, and what is the newes of those partes.

GUAZ. Seeing you will not suffer mee to speake Tuscan, but thinke best I shoulde followe our owne countrie language, I will frame my selfe to speake as the common people doeth.

ANNIB. So shall you commit a fault unseemely for so wise a Gentleman as you are, and you shall therein imitate some of our Citizens, who coveting to bee counted pleasant fellows, take delight in counterfaiting to speake clownishly, whereof it commeth to passe, that comming afterwarde into the companie of grave persons, they are not able to refraine those follies, and so shewe themselves rusticall, and uncivile in their speech.

GUAZ. If you forbid mee both forraine speache, and my owne naturall language also, I knowe not howe I shall speake, mee thinkes by you, that you meane to tye my tongue.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. I doe not prohibite you to speake in your naturall and mother tongue, but I woulde not have you use improper and unfit speeches.

GUAZ. The more a Tuscan speake like, shal hee not bee the more commended ?

ANNIB. Yes mary shall hee.

GUAZ. By the same reason, the more I shall speake Montserrat like, the more praise I shall merite.

ANNIB. The same reason cannot hold in things which are unlike, like as these two tongues are. For the Tuscan is perfect, and ours imperfect : so that of good thinges wee ought alwaies to choose the best, and of evill, to leave the worst.

GUAZ. If I ought to avoide the worst wordes in our tongue, I must bee faine to put Tuscan wordes in their steede, which doing, I shall make the hearers to laugh at mee, for making suche a mingle mangle of Lombarde and Tuscan wordes together. And for my parte, I woulde thinke it better to speake one tongue, altogether our owne, or altogether Bergamasque, then to speake a language so divers, and mingled of the Tuscan, and our owne, which joyned together, have that grace whiche Dant sheweth, when hee saith :

Non credo che per terra andasse anchoi.

ANNIB. I thinke you have noted three sortes of garments, which are used at this day, whereof some are of one only colour, like unto Crowes or Swannes, some of divers colours, like unto Pies or Parrets, wherein you see the colours devided, and separated : some are of silke or wooll, of divers colours, so well incorporated and mingled together, that it is not possible to discern the one colour from the other, likè unto the feathers of Partridges, or of certain Pigeons, whose colour is so confused and chaungeable, that a man cannot say what colour they are of. The very same differences are found in speach, for that some use simple speach, consisting of the tongue only, some compounde of two or three divers tongues, some mingled and

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

changeable. And I am of this minde, that this mingled kinde of speach ought to bee permitted to most men, that simple kinde to fewe, but that divers kinde, to none at all. Nowe these onely ought to use that simple kinde of speach, whose language is perfect, and polished, and all one in speaking and writing. But those ought to use the mixed kinde, whose mother tongue is rude and unperfect, like as ours is. But those erre muche which speake in divers sorts, using sometime wordes which are stark naught, and sometime those which are excellent good, like as Dant did, ending that Tuscan verse before rehearsed, with a rude worde of Lombardy, which in respect of the other wordes, resemblenth a peece of course cloth set uppon a velvet garment.

GUAZ. That Poet is to be excused, for that in his time his tongue was not come to that perfection that nowe it is of.

ANNIB. In deede in that respect hee is to bee excused, and besides, when the necessitie of the ryme did not drive him to it, hee used oftner *Hoggi*, then *Anchoi*. Moreover, intreating of high and waightie matters, hee bent him selfe rather to profite those which shoulde reade him, then to delight them. And you may well consider that when the minde travelleth in deepe and hard matters, it cannot bee curious in the choyse of wordes.

GUAZ. You say well, but I am of this minde, that the making of rime, shoulde not make a Poet use naughtie wordes.

ANNIB. Albeit it bee a fault, yet it is muche lesse then that which certaine Poets at this day commit, who take no care howe the sentences hang together, so that the ryme fall right: putting in suche fonde devises, so farre from the expectation of the discrete Reader, that they make him readier to laugh at them, then to learne them. Like as an ignoraunt Asse some time did, who as your brother tolde the other day in the Academie, ended the first verse of a Sonnet, with this worde *Ersiglia*, and to rime with that in the fourth verse, hee put *Uriglia*, and in the next following *Striglia*. And lastly, not knowing howe to rime uppe the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

other quaternarie, hee botcht it up with *una caviglia*. Whereby wee may gather, that if the faulte in wordes bee veniall, the faulte in sentence and matter is mortall.

GUAZ. Seeing you neither allowe my simple speeche, nor divers, but will have mee use only mingled and changeable, it is requisite, if it so please you, that you lay before mee the way to myxe this chaungeable language, in suche sort, that the division and parting of the colours bee not perceived.

ANNIB. As in changeable silke and cloth, there is ever some one colour that sheweth more lively then the rest : so to fashion this mixed speeche, it is necessary that the natural language bee chiefly set foorth, in suche discrete sort as you doe. For you dippe somewhat the Pencill of your tongue in the freshe and cleere colour of the Tuscan tongue. Whereby you shadowe the stained spottes of our mother tongue, mary yet so lightly that your speeche is alwayes knowne for Lombard.

GUAZ. As I remember, there was a Philosopher, who speaking of the myngling, and effectes of divers colours, saith, that by mingling togeather white and black, browne is made : so your meaning is belike, that I speake neither Lombard nor Tuscan, but some hotche potche of both.

ANNIB. In making this browne colour, you make your selfe shewe bright : and in confounding these tongues, you shewe your selfe to bee of good judgement. And for that examples explaine thinges more plainely, I will tell you that I have noted how, in this mixture, you have utterly razed these wordes, *il moizo la feia la Sgroglia*, and other suche like corrupt wordes (whiche are proper not only to some poore labourers of this Countrie, but also to some Citizens) and in steede thereof, have enterlined these woordes, *Matto, pecora*, and *guscio*. And as it behooveth a Gentleman to speake better then a Plebeian, so the wisest and best learned Gentleman, ought to speake better then those that are of lesse learning : But alwayes in such sort, that hee seeme not to set uppe a newe language, and bee a stranger in his owne house. And for conclusion, that hee

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

have regarde to this sentence, That hee bee indued with suche knowledge as the fewest sorte have attained to, and that hee use suche speache as the most part are accustomed to.

GUAZ. You have handled this matter, touching speeche, verie profoundly, but yet I am not thoroughly cleered of one doubt: For when I shal observe al those things you have spoken of, I shal easily make my selfe to bee knowne for a Lombard, but it shall bee harde to discern by my speache whether I bee of that parte of Lombardie called Montferrat. Whereby that which you have set downe shall take no place, that every one ought to manifest by his tongue of what countrie he is, for I may as wel be taken to bee of Plaisance or of Verona, as of this Citie.

ANNIB. Your doubt, maketh mee out of doubt, that my discourse touching this matter is not yet finished, and therefore in fewe wordes I answere you, that as by the bookes, apparrell, and behaviour, wee give a gesse of what Countrie a man is, so the speache ought more manifestly to bewray it.

GUAZ. The Gascons and the Frenchmen are evidently enough knowne from others, by their blasphemie and swearing.

ANNIB. The like is used almost in all places, but the just God will use no difference in punishing us for it. I would also that not onely in the words, but also in the sound, accent, and pronuntiation, wee shoulde retaine some signes and markes of our countrie, aswel to shewe our selves such as wee are to strangers, as also not to greeve, by a thorowe reformation and diversitie, our councitriemen, with whom wee must leade our lives: And therefore reason would we shoulde in some sort shewe our selves agreeable to them in speach and manners. And for so much as we began this discourse of the tongue by a similitude of money, we wil end it with the same, and conclude, that as money, by meane of the coine hath a publike stampe set upon it, whereby it is knowen where it was made, so our speach ought to have a mark upon it, which may shewe the originall, and countrie of him that speaketh.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. You may now if it please you, descende to other things, which this day are to bee spoken of.

ANNIB. Make account that all which hath been sayde hytherunto, appertaineth only to the pleasure of the eare, and is but externall, and without. Nowe wee have to consider more deeply, such thinges as are convenient for education and manners requisite in civile conversation. For Diogines used to say, That the Mathematicians behelde the heaven and the starres, but saw not that which lay before their feete: and that Orators study to speake wel, but doe it not. Having then set down in our civil conversation the purity of speech, we must now consider that it is not sufficient, without the puritie and sinceritie of manners. And therefore every one ought to labour, to conforme his minde and affections to his wordes, yea and having not the gift of pure speech, hee ought to supplie that defect, with the puritie and simplicitie of manners. And thereupon that graunde Captaine Marius, speaking before the people of Rome sayde, My woordes are not well set in order, but I waygh not that much, so that my deedes bee good. Those have neede of artificiall speech, who with goodly woordes goe about to cover dishonest deedes.

GUAZZO. Your conclusion in briefe is, that to be acceptable in companie, a man must indeavour to be a Grecian in wordes, and a Romane in deedes.

ANNIB. You have hit my meaning right: but for that I have already protested, that I will not binde my selfe to search out all the partes of morall Philosophy, we will give those, that are more studious, leave to turne over the Philosophers bookes, to furnish their mindes thorowly with morall precepts, and wee will content our selves to speake of things most familiar, and easie to bee observed in conversation. Amongst the whiche (to growe nowe to the matter) I woulde wishe every one that seeketh to winne credite in companie, to resolve with him selfe above all thinges (whiche very fewe folke doe) to followe that excellent and divine counsell of Socrates, who beeing demaunded which was the readiest way for a man to winne honour

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

and renowne : answered, To indeavour, to bee such a one in deede, as hee desireth to seeme to bee in shewe.

GUAZZO. If you meane to intreate but of the easiest matters, you must let that alone. For seeing there is almost no man that putteth it in execution, it is a signe that it is a very harde point : and you knowe that a very great difficultie, and an impossibility, are taken by the lawes for one self thing.

ANNIB. Men leave it not undone, for want of power to doe it, or of knowledge how to doe it, but onely for want of will : and therefore you must not judge those things hard to bee done, which consist onely in our will to doe, or not to doe.

GUAZ. If to bee learned, depended so well of my will, as to make a shewe as though I were learned, I woulde perchaunce bee better learned then I seeme to bee, for that I shoulde like better to bee, than to seeme to bee : but you knowe, that to attaine to learning, there is not onely required a wil, but study, watching, labour, and disquiet, which are irkesome thinges, so that according to the fashion of others, to hyde my ignorance, I force my selfe to seeme that I am not.

ANNIB. You knowe that the will is not shoven, nor executed of it selfe, but is manifested by the workes that insue : which though they be troublesome and ful of labour, yet if the wil be forwarde (if they bee such thinges as may bee done) they become easie to bee accomplished. Where-uppon it is commonly sayde, that nothing is hard unto a willing heart.

GUAZ. I allowe that conclusion for good, but that hateful, seeming without beeing, beeing (as you say) in companie to bee avoided, I thinke it needeful that you shewe the way how wee should avoide it.

ANNIB. You have reason to seeke how to eschew this fault, for when wee goe about to perswade others, that wee knowe that whiche wee doe not, wee deceive not others, but our owne selves, and at the length wee are taken tardie in our ignorance. There are then divers wayes to avoyde it : the first is, that the tongue goe not before the wit.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

And as women before they present themselves to the view of others, prie in their glasse, and take counsayle and assistance therof: so before wee utter our wordes, we must have recourse to the inward glasse, that wee may order and place them in such sorte, that the hearers may not judge, that they take their beginning rather from the mouth, then from the heart, and that they are rather shot forth at all adventures rashly, then uttered with reason advisedly. Of this premeditation this good shall come, that no man will adventure to speake of thinges hee knoweth not, as the ignorant commonly doe. For according to the opinion of a wise man, he that speaketh he knoweth not what, playeth in a manner the parte of a madde man, and falleth into the fault that Alexander the great did, who reasoning of painting in the house of Apelles, and using speeches impertinent and contrarie to that art, the wise Painter whispered him in the eare, that hee shoulde speake no more of that matter, or els that he shoulde speake softly, for that his prentices laught him to scorne.

GUAZ. I allowe wel of this, * wherewith also this saying agreeth, That it is no greater prayse to discourse well of that one knoweth, then to bee silent in that hee knoweth not,* whereof a Poet saide verie well:

Let Sea men speake of windes,
of beeves herdes that them keepe:
Let Souldiours talke of war and fight,
and sheepeheardes of their sheepe.

ANNIB. It is not long since that a certaine Gentleman (who coveted to be counted learned) chaunced to bee in the company of those that were learned men in deede, whereas there was talke of certaine new and rare workes which were verie shortly to be put in print: hee began to speake of an uncle of his deceased, not long before, who in deede was a man verie well learned: and added further, that at his death hee left with him a woorke to be published, the goodliest that might be: and beeing askt whereof it intreated, hee answered, I assure you it intreateth of all the excellent

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

things of the worlde, I can not expresse unto you the great pleasure I take in reading it. But being afterwarde aske whether the woorke were in proase or verse, the poore Gentleman without discretion, answered, that hee had forgotten that.

GUAZ. You have produced a pretie example, nowe I pray you shewe mee some other way to avoyde this apparence.

ANNIB. An other is, not to speake, while an other is in speaking, before the time serve, and before he which speaketh be thorowly understood: for that divers persons, greedie of this sottishe seeming, will not suffer their companion to ende his speech, but interrupting him, and taking the word as it were out of his mouth, will make a shew that they are better learned, and better able to goe thorow with the matter then hee, when in verie deede they litle or nothing understande it. Wherein they resemble those ignorant fooles, who, whiles the Priestes sing at their service, joyne their voices and keepe tune with them, without understanding any thing they say.

GUAZ. This fault is hatefull in company, and offendeth greatly him which speaketh. Touching this, I remember howe a Gentleman began to rehearse in a certaine company, the order and solemnitie of the mariage of the Duke my maister, whereat hee was present: and while hee was speaking, one of the hearers almost at everie worde woulde put in his speake in the matter, thereby to shewe, that hee well understood the whole matter: the Gentleman having borne long enough with this indiscreete dealing, at the length paused a litle, and saide, My maisters, it seemeth to mee, that this Gentleman knoweth the whole matter better then I, and therefore I will leave it to him, thorowly to recount it unto you. This digression, as you may imagine, made my Gentleman pull in his hornes, and to acknowledge his fault, so that without speaking a worde more, hee suffered the other Gentleman to go forward, and to make an end of his matter

ANNIB. Certaine it is, that wee ought not to interrupt him which speaketh, but rather with a certaine modestie

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

to take sometime that which he saith, for newes, though everie one knewe it before. But this interrupting of an other, were but a small matter, if a greater inconvenience did not insue of it. For that he which hath not the patience to give eare to that which is spoken, oftentimes taketh wordes in other sense then they are spoken. Wherein he resembleth a Dogge, who hearing one knocke at the doore, barketh by and by, before he know whether it be a friend or an enemy, that is there. Wherof arise controversies without cause, and much confusion, which should not happen if the hearer were more discreete, and woulde attend the end of the matter. So that we may well say, that those which are impatient to heare, are rashe to judge, and are likewise overhastie Judges : who either by persuasion, or by affection are induced to pronounce sentence, before they heare what either part can say for them selves.

GUAZ. Verily, I can not abide how in some companies all will speake together, interrupting one an others talke, and resembling a flocke of Stares, or of Dawes, or other birdes, which when they are lighten on some tree together, make a confused charme and noyse all at once.

ANNIB. And you which are discreete, if you chaunce amongst suche fellowes, because you will not shew your selfe parciall, are faine to beholde, assoone one, assoone an other, and make a signe with your countenance to all, to shew that you give eare unto them.

GUAZ. Without harkening in deede to any one of them.

ANNIB. Right, we wil say then, according to the opinion of a Grecian, that to covet to speake alwayes, and never to heare others, is a kinde of tyrannie, so that in talke the speaker and the hearer ought to agree to keepe turnes as it were, like as they doe at tennis. Besides, one that can quietly heare an other speake, sheweth howe he liketh to have the truth evidently and quietly opened in every matter : and that he can not away with unadvised and contentious arguing. And thereupon it is saide, That to use silence in time and place, passeth all well speaking : and that it ought to be put in the number of the Philo-

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

sophicall vertues. For as the Oratour is not knowne but only by speaking, so the Philosopher is no lesse knowne by modest silence, then by his grave sentences. * Therefore I would wish every one in speaking so to use the matter, that it may seeme he is rather urged to speake of necessitie, then desirous to doe it voluntarily. Imitating that wise man, who is commended for three especiall vertues : the one, that hee never tolde lye, the other, that he never spoke yll of any, and the third, that hee never spoke but upon necessarie occasion.* Whereupon I conclude, that in companie everie one ought to observe two speciall times to speake : the one, when things come in question which hee understandeth perfectly well, and hath at his fingers endes as it were : the other, when such matters arise, as hee must needes speake of. In these twoo cases, it is better to speake then to bee silent, in all other, hee that shall use silence shall choose the best way : and avoiding that vaine and counterfeite seeming, shall winne greater commendation.

GUAZ. Neither yet for all that, doe I thinke it meete, for any to be hasty to speake of all things that he understandeth and knoweth perfectly, but to goe slowly forward in them, and to weigh whether they concerne his calling, or not. For albeit, by reason of my continuall sicklinesse, I have been driven to bestowe some time in the studie of Galen, yet for that my cheefe profession is not that way, I shoulde be misliked if I shoulde playe the Phisition amongst Phisitions, and enter into any deepe discourse of phisicke.

ANNIB. It is no doubt an odious thing for a man to take uppon him sufficiencie, and to be prattling in every matter. Whereuppon it is sayde that King Cleomenes, as a poore feeble Sophist reasoned in his presence of valour and force, fell a laughing, saying, If a Swallow shoulde speake of strength, I shoulde not forbear laughing, but if an Egle did it, I shoulde hearken to him attentively. And therefore it were not seemely for you to take occasion to speake of Phisicke : and if occasion shal be given you, you may speake of it in way of doubting, or demaunding some

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

question : manifesting by that modestie, that you have more desire to understande that you knowe not, then to utter that you knowe. Wherefore everie one ought to consider what opinion other men have of him, and in what matters they will willingly heare him, and easily give credite to him, and in no wise to meddle in any other matters.

GUAZ. Have you any other meanes to shewe us, wherby we may flie this fond seeming?

ANNIB. Marie for that purpose, sinceritie and playne dealing is especially good, a thing verie commendable and necessarie, not only in deedes, but even in woordes likewise. For many, to the ende they may be taken for others then they are, use to shadowe the trueth, and when they thinke to winne credite, in the ende by some meanes or other they bewray them selves to bee lyers and cogging mates, and by their false dealing loose their credite. And though this faulte bee committed in divers sortes, yet mee thinkes it is too too intollerable, when a man attributeth to him selfe that whiche belongeth to others. According to the example of the Flye, whiche sitting uppon a Carte that was driven on the way, saide, hee had raysed a verie great dust : * or like the Emote, who sitting on the horne of an Oxe that was tilling the grounde, beeing askte what hee did there, answered, that hee went to plough.*

GUAZ. I have knowne many of them so impudent, that they have not beene ashamed to affirme them selves to bee the Authours of some thinges as newe, and whiche have befallen to them selves, which neverthesse are most stale, and founde written a thousande yeeres agoe in other mens workes.

ANNIB. Therein they are to bee punished as falsifiers and filchers, for that they appropriate to themselves the honour that is due to others. But they commonly doe penance for this offence, like as once the Dawe did, who shewing him selfe at a generall muster of Birdes, armed in all pointes with the feathers of an other foule, was at length stripped out of them, and mockt and laught at as a counterfaite theefe. Wee must therefore have reverent

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

regarde of the trueth, and take heede that we violate not the virginitie thereof in any sort, nor to pull so much as one haire from her, least wee sustaine shame thereby. And I will say unto you more, that the trueth is a thing so fickle, that a man may incurre reprehension not only by disguising it in some parte colourably, but even by verie reporting of it simply : which is, when men tell thinges which are true, but yet such as fewe will beleewe to be true.

GUAZ. Of that danger Dant expressly speaketh in these verses :

It is not good to tell that trueth,
which seemeth like unto a lie :
For though it be no fault in deede,
yet may a man be blande thereby.

ANNIB. You understande mee well, and so you see that in companie we must not only report the trueth plainly and faithfully, but besides, wee must be spare in speaking of thinges whiche are not easily beleevd. * And therefore it is saide, that Alexander reading certaine verses of a flattering Poet, wherein hee was commended for killing of Elephantes, for overthrowing of Bulles, and such like monstrous matters, rebuked him sharply, forbidding him to set foorth any more suche lies, whiche though they were true, yet they woulde bee taken for lies. But to avoide this vaine appearance, it is not sufficient for a man to report alwayes the trueth, if hee doe not likewise forbear to speake of him selfe, and his owne dooings, unlesse some necessitie require it. For though he speake therof truely and modestly, yet hee leaveth some suspicion of vanitie, and maketh himselfe lesse acceptable in companie : to avoide which inconvenience, let him alwayes have in minde that saying, that a man ought not to speake of him selfe, eyther in prayse or in disprayse : for that the one is a deede of arrogancie, the other of folly.*

GUAZ. What other wayes do you adde to these already rehearsed ?

ANNIB. Like as in the night time, the more you fixe your eyes on the firmament, the greater number of starres you

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

discover, so the more wee consider the sayde sentence of Socrates, the more wayes wee finde out to avoide this vaine seeming, and to be well thought of in companie. Let us say then againe, that a man ought to indeavour to bee suche a one, as hee desireth to seeme to bee, and wee shall thereby knowe that as naturally all men desire to bee had in honour and estimation, so in the most parte of men, that desire is vaine and foolishe, for that it is not founded uppon any desert, nor any vertue worthy of honour.

GUAZ. You say very true, and I see the abuse so great, that the least worthy, presse most for prayse and honour.

ANNIB. Yea but they misse the marke they shoote at, for it commonly falleth out contrarie to their desire? for seeing others to make no account of them, they beginne to set by them selves, and stirred up with a foolishe disdain, they put on a Lyons skin, and looke with a sterne and fierce countenance: By means whereof they become hatefull to all men. But if according to the Philosopher they knew that honour did consist, rather in him which honoureth, then in him which is honoured, they would never take uppon them so bigly, nor set them selves out so arrogantly, knowing that it is not in their power to bee honoured of them selves. * Wherefore, who so seeketh to bee had in reputation, either for wisdom, justice, fortitude, or temperance, must examine well him selfe, whether any of these vertues be in him, otherwise his desire can not possiblye take effect.

GUAZ. If none shoulde bee had in honour, but men of valour and merite, you shoulde not see men even of the meanest sorte, greatly esteemed of, and favoured of the people, only for the good nature and disposition which is noted to be in them, notwithstanding they are voide of learning, and of all those partes, by the aide whereof, men attaine to honour.

ANNIB. Those whom you speake of, are rather loved then honoured, and therefore I ment to tell you, that it is not enough for a man to bee honoured for some office that hee is in, or for vertue that is in him, if hee purchase not also

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

the friendship and good will of other, whiche is the right and sure bond of conversation : * and in my judgement, they may bee rightly termed their owne enemies whiche labour not by all lawfull and laudable meanes, to heape up to them selves so riche a treasure.

GUAZ. And howe I pray you is this good will chiefly to be gotten ?

ANNIB. It is gotten of the absent by reporting well of them behinde their backes, and of the present, by using that common meane and instrument, whereby mens hearts are wonne, that is, curtesie and affabilitie.

GUAZ. Out of doubt, there is nothing that maketh us swarve more from humane nature, then surlinesse, and it is plainly seene, that these austere countenaunces, and newe Catoes, are hated of all men. And where they count a prayse never to laugh, to bende the browes, to frowne, to looke terribly, and to use rough speech, they make them selves knowne for proude and discourteous, and with their pride are odious to the proude them selves.

ANNIB. I knowe some so haughtie and uncivill, that they disdaine to salute those whiche salute them, which is a signe of a barbarous minde, to be neither amiable in countenance, nor affable in woordes. And though they think they doe a man no wrong thereby, yet it maketh men hate them as enemies.

GUAZ. I can not in any wise abide that sort of men, and I hold rather with those whiche commit this faulte unwares, and by oversight.

ANNIB. The fault which is so committed by negligence or oversight is too grosse, and there is no man that will so interpret it, and therefore they must resolve with them selves either to chaunge their manners, and not to bee so scant of their Cappes and salutations, (whiche profite muche without any cost) or els to hire a man of purpose to give them notice of those whiche shall salute them, that they may remember to salute them againe. For these small trifles being respected, are of force to contract friendship, and beeing neglected, they may dissolve that friendship

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

whiche before was contracted. Therefore it is our partes rather to prevent our friendes in salutations, and to goe beyond them in curtesie.

GUAZ. There was a King of France, who as a common strumpet did reverence to him in the streete, did re-salute her curteously, and as one saide unto him, that his majestie had done honour to a woman voide of honestie, that did not deserve it: hee answered, that hee had rather erre in saluting some that are naught, then to faile at any time to salute any that are good.

ANNIB. A saying truly fit for a king, wherby appereth that he that doeth looke to finde curtesie, must like to shewe curtesie in what sorte soever it bee, and hee must alwayes remember, that neyther harde Wine is pleasaunte to the taste, neither haughtie behaviour acceptable in companie: whiche agreeth with the letters of Philip, King of Macedon: wherein is plainly shewed, that gentle and curteous speeche, is the Adamant stone whiche draweth unto it the heartes and good willes of all men.

And albeit it bee so, that this vertue bee seemely and commendable in all sortes of people, yet it shineth most brightly in those whiche are our Superiours, either in power or preeminence, when you receive of them curteous speeches, in suche sorte, that what by their gentle woordes, and what by their lively lookes and cheerefull countenance, you understande their affections, wheretoo your will doeth easily incline. I coulde heere alledge unto you, the example of two brothers, Gentlemen of great calling, whereof the one for his gentle speeche and pleasaunt lookes, is greatly beloved of everie one, and the other for his terrible countenance, and stately kinde of talke, is favoured but of a fewe: In so muche, that some whiche fall in talke of them, say, * that if they were to request any thing at their handes, they shoulde remaine more pleasauntly satisfied with a deniall of the first, then with a graunt of the other.

GUAZ. Thereuppon it is saide, that a man doeth one parte of the good turne, when hee gratuslye denyeth it.

ANNIB. But notwithstanding I commende this lowlye

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

and gentle behaviour, yet woulde I have every one keepe that majestie and state whiche is due to his estate. For to bee too populer and plausible, were to make largesse of the treasures of his curtesie, to abase him selfe, and to shew a signe of folly or flatterie. Wherby a man against his will may shew him selfe sometime to be that he is not, and give occasion to others to insult over him, and not to respect him so muche as they ought to doe. But I would wish men, so muche as is possible, to shewe at once the majestie of a Philosopher in the gravitie of sentences, and the humilitie of a Christian in the gentlenesse of woordes: having in minde, that curteous language multiplieth friendes, and mitigateth enemies, and that according to the proverbe, The meeke Lambe sucketh the teates of his owne damme and of others also.

GUAZ. I remember I have read a sentence, not muche different from that, to wit, that hee which speaketh gently to his neighbour, receiveth of him a gentle answer, and out of the breastes where hee searched milke, bringeth out butter.

ANNIB. * Assure your selfe it is even so. But to be sure to reape this commoditie, it is requisite that this gentle speeche come from the heart, and that it bee not intermingled with some fonde jesture and behaviour, whiche may make it smell of flatterie, and in steede of love, purchase hate. Like as some doe, who by their continuall girning and shewing of their teethe, make men doubt whether they honour them, or laugh at them.

GUAZ. It is a common saying, that to smile upon everie man, is rather a signe of a wayne minde, then of a cheerefull countenance.

ANNIB. Nowe I will joyne for a sister and companion to affabilitie, an other vertue, verie necessarie in Conversation, and it is that, whiche not only with gentle woordes, but with a certaine wittie and readie pleasantnesse delighteth wonderfully the hearers. And as that is a signe of curtesie, so this is a token of wit, and is used no lesse in jesting merily with others, then in taking jest patiently

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

of others. There are divers sortes of this pleasauntnesse, whereuppon both the Philosophers and Rhetoritians, seeing howe availeable it is to refreshe mindes overcharged with melancholy and pensive thoughtes, howe acceptable in companie, and howe conducible to health, have at large taught us divers wayes howe to attaine unto it.

GUAZ. I beleeeve well that arte and studie may helpe something in it, but in my judgement, it is nature that must worke chiefly. Whiche to bee true, appeareth by many men of great wisdom and learning, who in a pleasaunt matter have no grace at all, and contrariwise, many ignorant men, even of the common sorte, will handle a pleasaunt matter so finely, that they will make Heraclitus him selfe laugh at it.

ANNIB. I graunt unto you, that according to the diversitie of natures, the actions of men are divers, and that it is harde for one to moove delight in others, without a certaine naturall livelnesse of spirite. But it is seldome seene that a man pleasauntly conceited, is not also sharply witted. Which Gonella noteth, saying, That to playe the foole well, it behooveth a man first to be wise. But notwithstanding I am of opinion, that a man solemne by nature, may by use get the habite of pleasauntnesse, and I am sure you will not denie mee, but that there are some in countenance and jesture verie grave and severe, who in companie are pleasaunt and merie beyonde all measure. But it is better for a man not to alter his owne nature from gravitie, then to use mirth immodestlye. For as the meane is commendable, so the extreames are detestable, and growe either to scurrilitie in using too licentious scoffing, or els to incivilitie, in refusing all merie jesting.*

GUAZ. Nowe for so muche as you have shewen how pleasauntnesse in companie delighteth, and howe gentlenesse in speeche maketh us appeare what wee are, and discovereth the affections of our friendly heartes, whereby wee winne the good will of others, I woulde gladly knowe of you, if there bee any other way besides, whiche will worke such laudable effectes.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

ANNIB. Albeit by affabilitie, onely there is imprinted in mens heartes a good opinion of us, even lyke as is in the waxe by the Seale or Signet, yet wee must put too somewhat els, whereby that print and impression may bee made to continue: whereto is verie fit and avayleable the vertue called modestie, or rather that which we commonly call discretion.

GUAZ. And wherein is that vertue to be used?

ANNIB. In everie thing, but chiefly in finding fault with others mens faultes. And therefore it is to bee presupposed that God hath made man a companable creature, that by meanes of Conversation, hee may both assist others, and bee assisted him selfe, as neede shall require. Wherefore seeing no man on earth is indued with absolute perfection, wee must not mocke at other mens imperfections, least others likewise laugh at ours.

GUAZ. You say verie true, but doe you not knowe, that (as the Proverbe is) wee see better a farre off, then hard by us, and that at home wee see no more then Moles, but abroad as muche as Argus, * and that we can spie a moate in anothers eye, and not a beame in our own? * But wherof thinke you, this fault proceedeth?

ANNIB. Perchaunce of selfelove, which suffereth not a man to see his imperfections.

GUAZ. But mee thinkes suche a one seemeth to love others better then him selfe, for that hee leaveth to correct his owne faultes, to amende other mens.

ANNIB. Hee shoulde in verie deede love others better then him selfe, if hee were moved to seeke the amendment of other mens manners uppon charitie and love: but it is knowne too well, that hee is stirred to it of a certaine presumption and desire to seeme more wise then others, where-uppon I thinke the verie occasion why wee are so busie to finde faultes in others, is, that contrarie to the foresaide saying of Socrates, wee take more pleasure to seeme then to bee: and wee thinke we shewe not such wit in amending our owne faultes, as in reprehending other mens. But all those which will be such as they desire to seeme, will be

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

severe reformers of them selves, and they wil sooner spye their owne faultes then others.

GUAZ. I would gladly have you shewe particulerly which are the faultes of others, wherein this discretion is to be used.

ANNIB. There are two sortes of faults, the one, of those which are not full ripe, the other, of those whiche are thorowe rotten. I call the unrype ones, those whiche one is readie to commit, and the rype ones, those whiche are alreadie committed. Wee must staye the committing of the first so muche as wee may, for the other, some are to bee excused, some to bee blamed. If then wee perceive any in reasoning, to bee driven into so narowe a straite, that hee can not easily get out of it, without committing some absurditie either in wordes or in matter, it shall bee our parte discretely to prevent him. And (as one that stumbling at a stone is readie to fall downe) readily to take holde of him and staye him up : not staying till hee fall, to make the companie fall a laughing, and himselfe to bee ashamed. In dooing whereof, wee assure him, which speaketh, of the good account wee make of him, and give him to understande howe jealous wee are of his honour, in suche sort, that wee make him thereby verie friendly affectioned towards us : whereas on the contrarie, there is nothing that setteth him sooner in a rage, and maketh him to alienate his good will from us, then to thinke him selfe had in contempt, and to be flouted at.

GUAZ. This contempt in my opinion is intollerable : for that there is no man that thinketh so vilely and abjectly of himselfe, that hee deserveth to bee scorned. And in my opinion, besides that it is no good manner to mocke another, hee is also in daunger to receive the like, or a greater mocke himselfe : For suche a blowe as the Asse giveth against the wall, suche a one hee receiveth him selfe. And if it bee a fault to floute such as one knoweth, it is a greater fault to deride those hee knoweth not, whiche some rashe and insolent fellowes use to doe, who (as the saying is) judging the horses by the sadles and furnytüre, * consider

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

not that oft times under a clownishe coate, is hidden a noble and lively understanding.

ANNIB. A poore Peisant of Montserrat, may bee a prooffe thereof, who comming into the Citie accompanied with certaine women, a saucie Citizen saide unto him, Thou hast undertaken to bring a great many Goates to our market: Syr (answered hee) mee thinkes I have brought but a few, in respect of the great number of Buckes which is there.

GUAZ. I knowe a young man, who by his jesture and lookes seemeth to be but a foole, and for that cause some make them selves merry at him, but I may say to you, hee can frame his answeres so fitly, and can give quip for quip so wittily, that those which begin the skirmish with him boldly, are faine to retyre shamefully.

ANNIB. To conclude, it is a perilous thing to mock and scoffe at others, and, as the saying is, To anger a Waspe: And therefore it is not good to mocke any man in any maner of wyse. For if hee bee our better, or equall, hee will by no meanes abide that wee shoulde abjectly esteeme of him. If hee bee our inferiour, wee make him thereby to withdrawe his good wil from us, which is an yll matter: For wee ought to indeavour to make every one (if it bee possible) friendly affectioned towards us. Now if it fall out that another overshoots himselfe in talke, wee must consider whether it proceede of unskilfull foolishnesse, or of wilfull naughtinesse, for the first, wee ought to excuse it, or discretely to seeke to hyde it, without jesting at it, as some scoffing merchantes, which are altogether voide of wit, use to doe: for as it is an yll thing to make a scoffe at that which is well done, so is it a cruell and odious thing to scoffe at that which is yll done by ignorance or oversight. But let us come to those faultes whiche proceede of vice, and which are to be reprehended.

GUAZ. I thinke there is neede of farre more discretion in reprehending those, then in the other.

ANNIB. So muche the more, by howe muche the more daunger it is too deale in good earnest then in jest. And

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

though it bee meete for all sortes of men to excuse or cover those light faultes beefore spoken of, in all sortes of men, yet is it not lawfull for every one to correct and reprehende the imperfections and faultes of every man. As it is not lawfull for everie one either for lacke of authoritie (as for a young man too reprehende an olde, or for one of lowe estate, one that is of highe calling) or else for that hee is sprinckled with the like or with greater imperfections (as for an adulterer, to rebuke another for lasciviousnesse), or for lying. For as the Proverbe is,

Hee that mocketh the lame, must take heede that hee him selfe goe upright. Likewise wee ought not to presume to correct any others, but those, with whom either by consanguinitie, or by long familiaritie, wee have credite and authoritie. To bee briefe, in reprehending, wee must not onely have respect to the qualitie of the persons, but also of the places and times, and to consider both howe wee ought to use reprehension, and howe our friend is disposed to receive it. And therefore it is reported that one saying to another, Art thou not ashamed to bee drunken in such sort? Hee answered, Art not thou ashamed to reprehende one that is drunken? In like case it were to no purpose, but woulde rather make him worse, to rebuke a swearer, while hee is in his rage, and in the presence of others. Yet this advertisement is not enough, but to use deeper discretion in the matter, wee must use an honest kinde of deceite, and intermingle with the bitterness of reprehension, the sweetenesse of some prayse. Or wee muste blame others for those faultes whiche are in him whom wee seeke to reforme: or els reprove our selves as subject too suche imperfections. Finally, we ought to reprove our friende in suche sorte, that hee may take it well, and thinke him selfe beeholding too us for it. As some Philosophers in their Morall woorkes have taughte us to doo, whiche shall suffice touching this pointe. Nowe touching other meanes pertayning to the observation of the sentence beefore set downe, if wee looke thorowely intoo it, wee shall finde that all those, whiche love rather too bee, then to seeme to bee,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

will use that foresaide discretion in avoyding all quarrellous contentions and obstinate arguyng in matters, whereby a man, desirous of that vayne seeming, will often times, contrarye to all reason, seeke to seeme to have the upper hande of others.

GUAZ. In my opinion, there is nothing that maketh a manne woorse liked of in companie then that.

ANNIB. And therefore if hee which speaketh, saye the trueth, wee ought too contente our selves so well with his woordes, as if they were holy Scripture : And if hee chaunce too utter any untrueth, rather then too stande in contention with him (so that it no way prejudice us) we ought modestlye too beare with it : Observing alwayes the rule of Epictete, who sayd, that in companie wee must yeelde humbly too our Superiour, perswade gently with our inferiour, and agree quietly with our equall. And by that meanes there shall never bee any falling out.

Nowe I meane too tell you howe a manne ought too behave him selfe in such ceremonies as are requisite in companie.

GUAZ. I should thinke it wisdome to use no ceremonies at all in companie, for so much as they proceede rather of curious vanitie, then of faythfull affection : and in my judgement the more a man useth them, the lesse plaine dealing is thought to be in him. Wheras on the contrary, when you see one goe plainely to worke both in woordes and jesture, you say by and by, that he is a good honest meaning man. For my part I weigh it little, that my equall, having the wall of me, should goe from it to give me place : I had rather have him beare me more goodwill, and doe me lesse honour. And as you cannot but laugh to see a farre off a number of folke, skipping, leaping, and daunsing, you hearing no sowne of instrument : so it must needes make you merry, to see a farre two persons use diverse jestures and ceremonies of the head, the handes, the knees, and wrying their whole bodie, not hearing any worde they say. I will not say unto you, that for one which hath a good grace in these ceremonies, there are a thousand

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

whom it becommeth so ill to use them, that it will make you sicke at the heart to see it : and you shall see some of them goe so untowardly to worcke, that coveting to bee courtlike, they become plaine cartlike. As I have seene some talking with the Duke my maister, and seeing him bare headed, have taken his arme with both their handes, and made him put on his hat.

ANNIB. He should have put it of againe, to have shewed that he was not bare in respect of them, but because of the heate.

GUAZ. But there was another behaved himselfe somewhat better, who talking with the Duke being uncovered, tooke his cap foorth of his hand, and put it uppon his head. So that I say againe, that I can in no way away with these ceremonies, which are no lesse unseemely in worldly matters, then they are convenient in sacred and divine thinges.

ANNIB. I see not how those thinges can dislike you, which commonly like all men.

GUAZ. I thinke you mistake, for I know many, who professe them selves mortall enemies to those ceremonies.

ANNIB. Those same (and beleeeve me) openly detest them, but secretly desire them : and if you well consider the matter thorowly with your selfe, you shall knowe that ceremonies displease no bodie. For this is certaine, that they are doone in signe of honour, and there is not hee, who is not glad with all his heart to bee honoured, and who ought not to bee glad to honour another, for so much as (according to the saying of the Philosopher) hee whiche honoureth, receiveth more honour, then hee whiche is honoured, for like unto the Sunne, the beames of honour by reflexion, as it were, doe shine backe againe uppon him. And as hee whiche is ceremonious may bee thought to bee a dissembler, so hee whiche is not so, may bee taken to bee a clowne, a rudesby, or a contemner of others. I will not say that they doe yll whiche pray you to use no ceremonies in respect of them, but I rather commend them : For their very saying so, is a certaine kinde of Ceremonie and behaviour, whereby

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

they goe about to cover their ambition, and it is according to the fashion of Phisitions, who for manner sake sometime refuse money with their mouth, but take it with their hearte, and finger it with their handes. And as the sacred Ceremonies, which are voide of superstition, are not displeasing in Gods sight, and stirre up to devotion the mindes of the ignorant people, whiche are not come to the perfect knoweledge of Gods worde: so these worldly ceremonies purchase us the good will of our friendes and superiours, to whom they are addressed, and make us knowne for civile people, and from rude countrie loutes.

GUAZ. Howe then must wee behave our selves in Ceremonies?

ANNIB. Mary in such sort, that he which useth them, bewray thereby the affection of his heart, that the inward love may bee knowne, as well as the outwarde honour is seene, other wise ceremonies are lothsome unto us, and shew that the hearte is faigned. And on the other side, it is the parte of him whiche receiveth these outwarde honours, first, modestly to refuse them, shewing thereby that hee looketh not for them, otherwise hee shall shewe to bee somewhat proude, which is most hurtful in conversation: And besides, you knowe well that your equall doth honour unto you, rather of curtesie, then of dutie, and when you shal accept those honours as due unto you, and as of your inferiour, you shall make him care but a little what reverence hee sheweth unto you. To bee short, wee must receive honour at our friends hands, rather as offered by them, then looked for by us: and it is not amisse to follow the example of that discrete gentleman, who, after long strife betweene him and certaine of his friendes, who should first enter into the house, saith, You may nowe knowe well howe muche I am at your commaunde, seeing I am ready to obey you in thinges which turn to my dishonor: which said, he entred in without straying curtesie any longer.

GUAZ. I allowe the reasons alleadged by you to maintaine Ceremonies, but I will say unto you, that they ought to bee observed rather amongst strangers, then familiar

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

friendes. For if I bee not deceived, true friendship can away neither with Ceremonious wordes nor deedes.

ANNIB. I am in deede of your minde, that from true friendship, Ceremonies shoulde be taken. But where at this day are those true friendes to bee found? Know you not that according to the Philosopher, Perfect friendshippe extendeth not towards divers persons, but is restrained to the love of one alone? I knowe not who is your assured friende, but I am sure that I have not yet founde mine, with whom I might use suche open, simple, and free behaviour as you meane. For you must thinke it a harde matter to finde in the worlde two heartes which love perfectly. And though in token of true friendship, you call your companion brother, perchaunce hee shall have no minde to tearme you so: and to take that custome from you, hee wyll call you Maister Guazzo. And that you may not use too familiar speeche to him, hee will speake to your worship in suche sorte, that you shall bee faine to retyre one steppe backe, and use him rather Ceremoniously then lovingly. Of this common course of the world I gather, that those with whom wee are conversaunt, being rather well willers, then true friendes, it is our partes to take heede of too broade and to familiar behaviour with them, whereby wee may hazzarde to loose their good will: and to followe the example of Flies, which will not become tame amongst us, though they dayly dwell with us, and eate of our cates when wee doe.

GUAZ. I remaine satisfied of all that you have spoken. Nowe I consider with my selfe that this your discourse comprehendeth generall matters, and agreeth to all sortes of persons. And therefore I woulde bee glad that you shoulde declare particularly the meanes that every one ought to observe, according to his estate and calling.

ANNIB. Wee have alrede saide, that it is a matter impossible to set downe particularly, what every one ought to doe in companie, and therefore it shall suffice only to consider, that the thinges afore spoken, ought to bee common to all, like as the streetes, the Churches, the Fountaines, and common Conduites are. But as every one indevoureth

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

to get and appropriate to him, either house, landes, or moveables, in like sort, every one in his order of life and conversation, ought to propose unto him selfe speciall lawes, and suche a kinde of behaviour as shall bee convenient to his calling. But to reape the right fruite of conversation, whiche consisteth chiefly in the good will of others, it is necessary, that wee knowe and learne not onely what belongeth to our selves, but also howe to behave our selves towardes others, according to the difference of their estates, for that it is our hap to come in companie, sometime with the young, sometime with the olde, assoone with Gentlemen, assoone with the baser sorte, nowe and then with Princes, nowe and then with private persons, one while with the learned, another while with the ignoraunt, nowe with our owne Countriemen, then with strangers, nowe with the religious, then with the secular, nowe with men, then with women.

GUAZ. I see nowe well you shoulde enter into a Labyrinth, out of which you shoulde not get a long time, if you woulde discourse particularly of all these points.

ANNIB. Thinke hardily that everie one of these points will aske a whole dayes discourse.

GUAZ. Seeing you are so desirous to rydde your selfe of this matter in so short time, you doe as those whiche runne poste, who, desirous to go much ground, do not view, but only travers the Countries.

ANNIB. I say then (as it were in passing by) that there are fewe to bee founde, whiche are not sicke of some of those diseases, whiche wee have before mentioned, but the extreemest sicke of all, are young men : For whose health it is requisite, that they shave of from their face that counterfeite bearde, I meane that false seeming and vaine perswasion : remembring themselves, that as their faces are smooth and bare without hear, so their heades are barren of understanding. For if it bee true, that length of time bringeth experience, and that wisdom groweth of experience : it is moste true, that young men for lacke of yeeres and experience cannot bee wise : And thereof commeth

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

the Proverbe, That the Divell is full of knowledge, because hee is olde. And therefore they ought to bridle their over rashe tongues, and to use chiefly silence in steede of medicine, imprinting in their heartes this saying, That a young man shoulde hardly speake in his owne cause, though he bee in a manner urged unto it.

GUAZ. It is a common saying, that a young man is to be blamed, which will talke like an olde man, and a woman which will speake like a man.

ANNIB. Young men ought chiefly to keepe this silence when they are amongst olde men, whose companie is marvellous avayleable unto them.

GUAZ. It is so much behoofull to them, as it is for the most part hatefull to them, by reason of the diversitie of complexions, fancies, and conditions, so that they flye from it so much as possibly they may, that they may enjoy the companie of their equals.

ANNIB. Men ought to conceive so much the better opinion of those young men, which willingly associate themselves with old men, for that they seeme to prevent age, with vertue: and beginning by time to be wise, they continewe so a long time. Whereof it commeth, that easily, and before the tyme, as it were, with the good report they have wonne, and the good deedes they have done, they come to honour and preferment. And therefore in my opinion, those young men which eschue the companie of old, hyde their woundes, and make them to fester inwardly. And contrariwyse, those which followe it, lay open their imperfections, and thereby receive guerison.

GUAZ. It is much better to acknowledge our imperfections in our youth, then in our age, for as the Poet sayth,

In youth to doe amisse, it is the lesse reproche.

ANNIB. There is no doubt of it, but that young folke learne of old, by reason of their authoritie and wisdom, to moderate their burning desires, to acknowledge their wavering inconstancie, and to correct their other naturall imperfections. And as, having occasion of farre travayle

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

into unknowen Countries, wee addresse our selves to some one whiche knoweth the way to give us certaine instructions of it: so likewise in this pilgrimage wee have to make in this doutfull and deceitful life, wee can not doe better, then to bee informed of those which have happily, as it were, reached to their journies ende, to knowe what wayes wee ought to forsake, and what to take to come safely to the ende of our voyage: whiche is most daungerous to young folke, as the wise man sayth, who, to the uncertaine flight of the Egle in the ayre, of the ship on the sea, and of the serpent on the rocke, addeth, as most uncertaine, the way of a yong man in his first yeres. Yong men therefore are to folow the companie of olde, and to make their account, that hee which frequenteth the wise, becommeth wise, and to imitate the youth of Rome, which had age in such reverence, that every one did honour to his elder, as to his parent. And contrariwise it was counted a thing worthy punishment, if a yong man did no reverence to an olde, or a childe to one at mans state. * Yea in some Countries, it is not lawefull for a young man to beare witness against his elder.* And in truethe it is reasonable that eche one make reverent account of those whiche doe surmount them in age and understanding. And as they see their youngers honour them in respect that they are more auncient, so mooved by that example, they ought to reverence those whiche are their elders. But after other medicines meete for young mens health, I will for conclusion adde this, that as hee ought to avoyde bolde presumption, so hee ought in companie to bee indued with suche a modest shamefastnesse, that his cheekes may nowe and then bee dyed with Vermilion, whiche will become him, and is a token of a good nature, and a signe that he wil come to goodnesse.

GUAZ. I coulde never lyke of a young man that is impudent. For besides that hee is ill thought of, in that he wanteth the vertue of modestie, whiche hee ought to bee indued withal, it seemeth to prognosticate that he wil come to some ill end.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. I thinke wee have spoken sufficiently of yong folke, so that I thinke good that we turne our eyes from the East to the West, and consider what belongeth to old folke: even in whom there breake forth many maladies, as wel of mind as of body.

GUAZ. I know not how you can heale those old festred soares which are so hard to be cured.

ANNIB. Olde soares are in deede hardly healed, but al soares are not festred in old folke. I count those old and festred which have taken deepe rootes, and which began to growe even from youth forward, but those I count not old which old age for the most part bringeth with it. As to be severe, churlish, covetous, whining, etc. Which are diseases wherof some old folke may be cured, by giving place to reason.

GUAZ. Albeit perchaunce they may bee cured of those diseases, yet in my fancy it is not well done to goe about it. But it is better rather to followe their humour, like as we doe to those whiche are past recoverie, in every thing which they demaunde, following the common saying, that wee must not adde affliction to the afflicted.

ANNIB. The right olde men (to wit the wise) the neerer they approach to their ende, the more delight they take in knowledge and vertue. Touching this, I would have you call to minde the saying of him, whiche sayde that if hee had one foote within the grave, yet hee woulde still bee learning somewhat. For that hee was not ignorant that the things whiche wee knowe, are but the least part of the things wee knowe not. Yea wee may say, that a man never beginneth to knowe, until by age wee drawe towards the ende of our life. Which a certaine philosopher sheweth very wel, who with lamentation complaineth of nature, for giving a very long life to many reasonles creatures, using great liberalitie towards them, and dealing very hardly with man, who is deprived of life, then when he beginneth to live, that is, to understand, and then when hee ought to enjoy the fruites of his labours. But I meane not heere to discourse unto olde folke, what is requisite for them to

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

sustaine the burthen of age, and to arrive safely at the haven and ende of misery and sorrowe : For that were to perswade my selfe foolishly that Cato had not spoken of that matter largely and eloquently. But I wil say unto you, that many olde folke complaine without cause, that their age is smally regarded or reverenced, and perswade themselves, for that they have a whyte beard, for that they are bald, bleareyed, toothlesse, crooked, trembling, and sickly, that therfore al honor shoulde be due unto them, and many of them see not how voide they are of understanding, vertue, and wisdom. And therefore they ought to consider, that olde age is not to bee respected or reverenced for the number of their yeeres, but chiefly for the merite of their good conditions and Vertue : and there-uppon it is sayde, that to bee hoare heard, is a signe of yeeres, not of knowledge. And if I may say, that an old man without knowledge and vertue, is worthy no honour at all, for that it is a signe hee hath spent his youth in nothing that is commendable. Whiche is confirmed by this saying, that three sortes of men are odious to the world, a poore man proude, a riche man a lyar, and an old man a foole. Now touching conversation, I woulde advise old men to temper alwayes their talke with gravitie and wisdom, and for the most part to speake of those things which serve for example and instruction of life.

GUAZ. No doubt, it is alwayes the use to attribute much to old age, and their words are ever of more force then yong mens.

ANNIB. Thereof it commeth, that as yong men beeing asked their age, make themselves yonger then they are, to conserve the ornament of youth, and to make others thinke they have that force and sufficiency in them, which is incident to youth : so likewise old men alwayes make them selves older then they are, to enjoy the preheminance and authority which is given to age.*

GUAZZO. This is very true for the most part, yet now and then wee see some olde doating fooles, who notwithstanding they feele their legges feeble and trembling under

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

them, and see in their glasse their whyte heares, whiche exhorte them to change of life, and manners, yet for all that they wil not yeele themselves, but will take uppon them to play the souldiours, and the lovers, little esteeming that saying, that

It is not meete for age,
to sue the slippery traine
Of Venus or of Mars, both which
pay labour but with paine.

So that they will not onely not confesse their age, but make themselves yonger then they are.

ANNIB. Those whom you speake of are very offensive, for that by their evil example they imbolden young men to doe ill. And therefore I account him to be of great wisdom which can conforme his manners to his age, having an eye to the saying of the Apostle, when I was a childe I spoke like a childe, but being man growen, I cast away al childish tricks. But you say nothing of those, who not content to yeele to the course of nature, desire to seeme young, and goe another way to woorke to hide their age, that is, by pulling of their white heares, or else seeking to convert their silver heares into golden ones, the simple soules not perceiving that this their transformation or rather deformation is no more seene then a nose in a mans face.

GUAZ. There was one olde graybeard, who perceived this well ynough, but too late and with repentance. For having been denied a suite which hee craved at his princes handes, he went and dyed his bearde and his head, and perswading himselfe he should not be knowne, returned twoo dayes after to the prince, preferring his former suite, who spying his crafte, making as though he perceived it not, answered him, I cannot with mine honour graunt it to you, for that I have alredie denied it to your father, who twoo dayes since requested the same thing at my handes.

ANNIB. Let us nowe make an ende of this matter, advising olde men to suffer their minde to waxe olde together

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

with their bodie, and not to behave themselves youthfully in their age: and when they are arived to their ende, not to seeke to turne backe, but rather to give themselves to consider that age naturally maketh them crooked and stooping towards the ground, to the ende they may thinke to returne from whence they came, and to remember that at that time their breath even hangeth at their lippes.* They have further to take heede, least they contemne young folke (a fault common to many of them) for it is their parte too make account of them, and to use great discretion in their behaviour towards them, to the ende, that young folke (if for nothing else) may therby be mooved to doe them honour: otherwise they may assure themselves they shall bee had in contempt and derision. They must bee sure (being amongst youth) to use great respect as well in wordes as jestures, remembring that the intemperancie of olde men maketh young men more disordered and dissolute.* And to conclude, that they have regarde to the commaundement of Paule, that they bee sober, chaste, wise, sound in faith, in charitie, and in patience, which vertues will make them acceptable to all honest companies.* But nowe let us speake of Gentlemen and yeomen, betweene whom by reason of their difference and inequalitye, there are divers thinges to be observed in company.

GUAZ. I thinke that labour lost, or at least a thing not woorthie your labour, to goe about to instruct the base people, about whom, being by nature uncivill, rude, unto-warde, discourteous, rough, savage, as it were, barbarous, and voide of understanding, you shall loose your labour, and according to the Proverbe, both water and soape.

ANNIB. If you meane by those of base birth, only labourers and rustikes, our speeche in deede woulde bee spent in vaine: but if you consider the infinite number of persons which reache not to the degree of Gentlemen, and yet are not far from it, you will not deny but that both for the good minde they carie with them, and the good calling they live in, they are woorthie some place in company, and that they ought to bee put in the midst betweene Gentlemen

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

and clownes. And truly I knowe many men of meane calling, who in Gentlemanlike and courteous conditions, in good bringing up, and all their talke and behaviour, excell many Gentlemen. And contrariwise, I am sure you know many Gentlemen more uncivill then the Clownes themselves.

GUAZ. If they be uncivill, howe are they Gentlemen? And if they be Gentlemen, howe are they uncivill? I pray you even at once undoe mee the knot of this gentry, which I see to be verie intricate by reason of the diversitie of opinions which are about it, and so consequently you shall come to set forth manifestly the Conversation betweene gentlemen and yeomen.

ANNIB. Having this day to speake of many thinges and being alredie late, I cannot fully satisfie your request. For I shoulde be driven to stay heare long time to bring in all that, which many authors have at large written of it, especially that great Tiraquel one of the kinges counsellours in the Parliament at Paris, yet somewhat to followe your minde, and not much to hinder our course, I say unto you (as it were in passing by) that some falling to define gentry, have sayde it be the dignitie of the fathers and auncestours, others the auncient patrimonie, others riches joyned with vertue, others vertue onely. Besides that the woorthie maister George Carretto an Academike alleaged the other day in his discourse the authoritie of Balde who maketh three sortes of gentry, the first in respect of blood, as the common sorte understandeth it: the other in respect of good conditions, as the Philosopher taketh it: the thirde in respect of both, and that I call true gentry.

GUAZ. There might be added here that other sorte of gentry, which is gotten by the Priviledge of Princes.

ANNIB. Perchaunce he joyned that with the Philosophers gentry. For it may be sayde that the prince by that priveledge doeth approve the vertue and merites of him he rayseth to the state of gentry. But the excellencie of gentry hath ben much more restrained by Diogenes, who being asked, who were the best Gentlemen, answered,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

those which set naught by riches, honours, pleasures, and life, and which overcame their contraries, to wit, povertie, ignominie, payne, and death.

GUAZ. I thinke the race of such Gentlemen is at this day extinguished.

ANNIBALL. Nowe for that there are many distinctions of gentry according to the diversitie of opinions, albeeit some Philosophers assigne foure sortes and some five, I will bee so bolde devising familiarly with you, to make yet one sorte more according to myne owne fancy, though I swarve a little from their opinion. There are then three sortes of gentry, whereof I derive three sortes of Gentlemen, to witte : Gentlemen of the first, second, and third degree. I will give to those of the first degree, the name of halfe Gentlemen, having at this tyme no more proper terme. I wil cal the second, Gentlemen : and the third, right Gentlemen. Nowe of halfe Gentlemen, I ordaine three sorts, the first those which are Gentlemen only by birth, comming of some auncient house, but having in themselves neither good conditions nor good behaviour, nor so much as any shew of gentry.

GUAZ. Those in my opinion may rather be saide to bee discended of Gentlemen, then to be Gentlemen indeede : and these bee those which straine themselves to sweare at every worde by the fayth of a Gentleman, when there is no oth required of them, by meanes whereof they make themselves suspected, as witnesses which offer themselves before they bee asked for : and they seeme to bee afeard least they should not be taken for Gentlemen, as those who are knowen in lookes, in wordes, and in deedes to bee very clownes. And though they take upon them the name of Courtiers, yet in their behaviour they shewe themselves little better then Carters.

ANNIB. There is no cause why wee should mervaille at those differences, for like as in fieldes, so in houses, there springeth up fruite in great fertilitie, and in some processe of time, there come thereof excellent and famous men : and after by little and little they fall to decay and become barren,

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

so that the sharpenesse and goodnesse of the wit is chaunged, and degenerating is made grosse and blockish. Yea, it is evidently seene, that not onely houses and families waxe olde, but even whole Cities, yea the worlde it selfe. Howe many auncient houses have there been, wherof there is not at this day any remembrance? or else they are brought into poore and vile estate.

GUAZ. Dant saith therof wel, that

Races razed are, and houses runne to wracke.

ANNIB. Thereuppon it is saide not without greate reason, that if one have respect to the first originall, there is no king but is discended of slaves, nor slave, but commeth of kings. And if you call to minde things of the tyme past, and compare them with the present, yea if you but have regarde onely to the revolution of our tymes, you shall see that as all other things, so houses turne like the wheele, beeing nowe ascending, nowe at the highest, nowe discending, nowe at the lowest. So that it may be sayde to be gentry, both which beginneth, which increaseth, which diminisheth, and which vanisheth.

GUAZ. A man might also wel compare the state of gentry to the course of the moone. But wherefore is it thinke you, that God causeth this alteration and chaunge in families?

ANNIB. Perhaps to this end, that we should not hoorde up for our selves any treasure on earth: and that wee shoulde lift up our selves to the contemplation of heavenly thinges, in which only a man may put his assurance. But there may be here alledged another occasion, whiche is, that God will suffer no evil to remaine unpunished. For a famous writer, speaking of the nobilitie of the world, maketh it nothing else then auncient richesse, and addeth, that every rich man is either unjust him selfe, or else the heire of some unjust man. Whereuppon hee concludeth, that the gentry of ones house, taketh beginning of injustice: and therefore wee must not mervaille if things ill gotten are ill spent. But to returne to my purpose, these halfe

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

Gentlemen, who beeing not by nature indued with any vertue, make boast of the woorthinesse of their auncestours, are to bee laughed at : For the more they set foorth the woorthinesse of them, the more they lay open the imperfection of themselves, for that there is nothing that maketh the childrens faultes more to bee seene, then the bright shewe and glorious shyning of their fathers and graundfathers. And no doubt hee that hath no commendable thing in him, the more he speaketh of the gentry of his auncestours, the more vile and contemptible hee sheweth himselfe. And thereupon it is growen into a Proverbe that unfortunate children extoll the vertues of their parents. God therefore keepe us from the state of these halfe Gentlemen, whose deedes beeing not answereable to the nobilitie of their house, they are little accounted of in the worlde, and taken as it were for Bastardes. Wherefore we will conclude that in veritie and trueth wee ought to respect the qualities and vertues whiche are in the parties themselves, and that it is in vaine to stand upon the renowme of our progenitours. Next unto this first kind foloweth the second of Gentlemen by good conditions.

GUAZ. Which take you to be the best of those two ?

ANNIB. Whether do you more account of those things which are gotten with labour and industrie, or of those which nature or fortune bestoweth upon us ?

GUAZ. Why the first ?

ANNIB. And whether doe you thinke more excellent of the giftes of the mind, or of the body ?

GUAZ. The giftes of the minde.

ANNIB. Consider now that gentry by byrth costeth you nothing, but that you have it by succession, mary gentry by vertue you have gotten hardly, having first passed thorowe the pykes, and a thousande daungers. Moreover wee are to consider that gentry by blood belongeth to the body, but gentry by good conditions hath relation to the mind. Which made the tyrant Phalaris say, beeing demaunded what hee thought of gentry, that hee acknowledged gentry to come onely by the meanes of vertue, and al other things

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

by the meanes of fortune, for that one of base birth may become most noble above all kings : and contrariwise one wel borne may become the most wretched and contemptible of the worlde : and that therefore wee are to boast of the giftes of the minde, not of the gentry of our auncestours, which is alredie extinguished by the unknowen and degenerated posteritie. * Wherupon I thinke them worthy of great commendation, who from very lowe place with the ladder of their owne vertue climbe to most respected highnesse. As many Popes, Emperours, and kings have done beeing the sonnes of very meane men.*

GUAZ. Yet for al that you see how the world commonly reputeth gentry by byrth as legitimate, and gentry by vertue as bastardily, and farre inferiour to the other. And if you do but sounde the opinion of the Gentlemen of this Citie, they will, I warrant you, in a manner all of them say unto you that they had rather bee borne Gentlemen and have nothing in the worlde but their rapier and cloake, then to bee discended of base parentage, and to bee Senatours or Presidents.

ANNIB. It is reported that the foxe cast his tayle about a yong tree ful of fruite to the intent to shake it and make the fruites fal to the ground, but fayling of his purpose he went his way, finding fault with the fruite, saying, they were without tast and not good ynough for him. The like doe those whom you speake of, who being not by vertue able to aspire to those degrees, mislike of the degrees, and of those persons who by their vertue have attained unto them. But assure your selfe that those which hold that erronious opinion, are for the most part voide of vertue. But if you shal talke with a Gentleman that is so by birth, who by the helpe either of learning or of armes hath gotten this second gentry, he wil no doubt make more account of the gentry purchased by his owne vertue, then of that which is discended unto him by birth. So that I mervaille nothing though that common opinion take place, seeing that the number of Gentlemen without vertue is farre greater then of those which bee vertuous. Yet you remember that it

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

was sayde yesterday, that the common opinion consisteth not in the number, but in the qualitie of the persons : and therefore the opinion which you have brought forth shall not bee called common.

GUAZ. This same is one of the abuses of divers countries and specially of Fraunce, where learning is so litle accounted of, that a Gentleman, though he bee scarce able to maintaine himselfe, thinketh scorne too applye his minde too the studie either of the lawes or of phisick. And though there be no gentrie in a manner, to bee compared to that of the Presidentes and Counsellours of the King, yet you see those that are Gentlemen borne, count them to bee but base and ignoble. But I have seene many rightly served, for this their corrupt opinion, or rather obstinacie : For I have seene one of these Counsellours or Presidents (to keepe their state) suffer these Gentlemen which have occasion to use them, to knocke a great while at their gates, and when they are come in, they walke long time in the Court, or in the hall of the house, before they shall be admitted to their presence, and they are driven oftentimes (after that he shal be mounted in hast upon his Mule, to goe to the Palace) to lackey after like slaves, to infourme him of their causes and sutes. But there was nothing in Fraunce which went more against my stomacke, then to see the Secretaries of noble men in so litle credite and reputation : whereas in Italy the Secretaries of Princes are had in great honor, and justly, for that they are partakers of their inward thoughtes, and the keepers as it were upon trust of their honor and estimation. And in Fraunce he that hath a servant which can coppie out writings, and keepe count of his revenewes in a booke, he giveth him forthwith the name of Secretarie.

ANNIB. I have reasoned many times with your brother about that matter, who amongst other pleasant matters told mee, that in the voyage which hee made last, by post in Fraunce, being sent by the Duke our maister to the King, being to chaunge Horses in a certaine place, the Postmaister came unto him, and called twise aloude (Secretary)

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

and forthwith there came out of the stable a foule great Groome with a pen and inkehorne at his girdle, and a pen at his eare, who had charge given him to make ready three horses : wherupon the secretary set hand to the harnessse, and saddled one of them, and two other servants did the like : one of which, your brother asked why his maister made the secretary dresse horse ? who answered, that his maister tooke him for a Groome of the stable, and for their companion about the loking to the horse : but for that hee coulde wryte and keepe a reckoning of the horses which were let out, his Maister had likewyse made him his secretary.

GUAZ. Hee might wel say hee was secretarie *in Utroque*, to wit, with the pen and the currycombe.

ANNIB. Hee sayde moreover, that when the Duke of Nevers sent him to the lodging of some Prince, or of the great chauncelour, or some other, he was soone let in, if he termed himself one of the Dukes gentlemen, but if hee named himselfe secretarie, they made him tarie longer, and regarded him the lesser. Nowe to returne to my purpose, I say againe, that the Gentleman by vertue, is more excellent then the Gentleman by birth. Yea I coulde say unto you, that many count gentry by blood to bee foolish, and nothing at all : and amongst others a certaine wise man saide, that gentry of the minde, is, to bee indued with woorthy thoughts : and the gentry of the body, is the gentlemanlike minde : meaning, that the gentry of the body, was not to bee attributed to the house wee came of. Another Philosopher affirmeth likewise, that it is in vaine called gentry, whiche referring it selfe to the worthinesse of blood, is not ours, but others. And therefore the light of another cannot make mee shine, if there be no brightnesse in my selfe.

GUAZ. That is noted to us by the saying of Dant, that only he is bright, who shineth of him selfe.

ANNIB. A man may also adde here the saying of our Galen, that those who beeing voide of vertue themselves, have recourse to the cognisances and armes of their predecessours, see not how that vaine glorie is like certaine kinde of coyne, which is currant in those townes and places

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

where it hath been stamped and made, but it cannot bee put away in other places, but is taken for counterfayte and naught. But I wil not here omit that which is excellently written in a letter, by his brother Frauncis Coronato, our Academike doctour in divinitie, that they are to bee laughed at, whiche take so much upon them, to put difference betweene themselves and other, as if they had been made by some other creatour then God, for that the fleshe maketh no difference, nor one more excellent then another. And though a vessel of gold bee more esteemed then one of Copper, for that it is of more precious and fine matter, yet that cannot bee saide of us, who come all of one lump of fleshe. Yea the soule it self maketh no difference betweene us, for so much as wee come all of one father and creatour. But that which putteth a difference betweene us, is the vertue of the minde. So that neither in respect of the matter, nor of the fourme, nor of the mind, considered of it selfe, but in respect of the vertue gotten and acquired by our owne industry, wee are more excellent one then another. And therof we may now see that touching the original wee are all one thing, and as one sayde, wee are all made of durt : and as wee have one selfe beginning, so have wee likewise one selfe ende. Wherefore wee are to conclude, that gentry and renowme is not got by our birth, but by our life, yea and sometyme by our death, according to that saying,

A worthy death doeth honour al our life.

GUAZ. It may be well sayde also that a right Gentleman is not borne as the Poet, but made as the Oratour.

ANNIB. It is saide also that philosophy received not Plato a Gentleman, but made him one.

GUAZ. Yet for al that in my opinion it is a good thing to be discended of a good and honorable house.

ANNIB. I graunt you that, for gentle race, besides other good effects, maketh a man ashamed to degenerate from the vertue and valour of his auncestours. Yea and gentry is to be honored for this respect, that for the most part the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

better lineage we come of, the better behaviour wee are of. And therefore Q. Max. Scipio, and others said, that beholding the pictures and ymages of their auncestours, they felt themselves marvaylously stirred up to vertue. Wheretoo princes have a regard, indeavouring alwaies to make gentlemen their chiefe officers. And truely it happeneth seldom that he doeth ill, who seeth thereby the honour of his auncestours together with his owne brought in danger.

GUAZ. There remaineth for you now to speake of the third sort of halfe Gentlemen.

ANNIB. I need not use many words to you touching that sorte, and it sufficeth to say, that those same get their gentry by custome: and that this gentry is so weake, that it extendeth not generally, but hath place only in some part. And albeet a common soldiour, or a merchant, or other living of his owne renewes, bee not altogether taken for a Gentleman, yet there are some countries and townes, where, according to the custome, or by some other accident, they are taken for Gentlemen, and admitted indifferently into the companie of Gentlemen. And therefore according to that common opinion, those same may be called Gentlemen in their countrie, but not else where.

GUAZ. In few woordes, your minde is that those amongst the Italians, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Lombardes, or of any other nation, are Gentlemen, which are termed and taken so: and that a man may bee a gentleman or a yoman according to the custome of the place where hee is, out of which he shalbe otherwise by a contrary custome.

ANNIB. My meaning is even so. But seeing wee have spoken sufficiently of halfe Gentlemen, let us speake nowe of Gentlemen which have the two first kindes of gentry joined together: to witte, that by blood, and that by vertue. The Philosophers make great account of gentry by birth, when it is accompanied with vertue, without whiche it may bee said to be dead, as a body without breath. And therefore if wee looke thorowly into the matter, wee shall finde that it happeneth seldome, that a house doth maintaine it selfe long in honour without vertue, or is able

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

to rise to high estate and dignitie. For if one of base calling, give the beginning to gentry by the excellencie of some vertue, that is a certaine signe that vertue is the foundation of gentry, and that to maintaine gentry, it is necessarie to maintaine the foundation thereof.

GUAZZO. In trueth gentry is unseemely without vertue, and in my opinion one that is borne a Gentleman, is not worthy of account, when hee is not indued with good conditions.

ANNIB. Leaving then the wrong opinion of some countries, to come neere to the ancient majestie of the Romanes, wee wil hold for certaine that gentry increaseth no lesse by the vertue of learning, then by the prowesse of armes. For that this saying is most true, that gentry is the daughter of knowledge: and that knowledge doeth gentellise him that possesseth it. And therefore the science and knowledge of good letters, beeing no lesse to be esteemed of, then the knowledge of martiall feates, it is certaine that the gentry of the one, is no lesse then of the other. But for all this, wee must not thinke it sufficient for us to bee knownen to bee but indifferently learned and vertuous, but wee must indeavour to attaine to excellencie therein. For the more good partes bee in a man, the more Gentlemanlike hee is sayde to bee. And I can not heere but speake of the folly of some Gentlemen, who having nothing but gentry by byrth to bragge of, are not ashamed to say, that they are as good Gentlemen as the Emperour, as if a Gentleman could not increase in gentry: And not considering that there are degrees of gentry, as wel as of dignities and honours: and that one is so much more Gentleman * by birth * then another, by howe much his gentry is more auncient, more renowned, more manifest, and more mightie. Which may bee sayde, not only in respect of birth, but also in respect of vertue. And as of the two dogs which Lycurgus brought before the Spartanes, which though they came both of one lytter, yet the one ran to the potage pot, the other at the hare: so of two brothers, the one shalbee more gentle then the other, by howe much hee shalbe more

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

learned, vertuous, and placed in higher degree. And you knowe that without the spurres of preferment, to pricke men forward, the gentry of houses woulde soone decay, for no Gentleman woulde take paines to atchieve any thing woorthy of honour. To avoide which inconvenience, wee ought to have in our mindes the saying of Galen, which is, If wee be Gentlemen, let us not shew our selves unworthy of our house: if we come of a meane house, let us by our deeds rayse it to renowme. But what speake I of Galen, let us thinke of that divine saying, You are the children of Abraham, doe the woorkes of Abraham. Yet in my opinion it is not ynough to follow the trace of woorthie predecessours, but wee must lay before us the noble devise of Charles the fifth, to wit, the pillers of Hercules, and to dispose our selves to goe beyond them, and to attaine to such vertue, as may woorthily be termed heroycall. For if it be a great delight for a man to know, that from time to time out of his house, (as out of the Trojan horse) there have yssued captaines, Colonels, and knightes, like as out of the universities of Pavia, Padua, and Bologna, there come doctours of philosophie, phisicke, and lawe, howe much more good shall it doe him, who may say, that he hath, according to the Proverbe, * wings broder then the nest,* and by the excellencie of his deedes, and sufficiencie in learning and feates of armes, hath surpassed the desertes, dignities, and degrees of his predecessours, and alone as it were caried away the price. By the example of Augustus, who sayd, I found Rome of stones and bricke, but I have left it of marble. Nowe to dispatch this matter, these gentlemen whom I speake of, may make their boaste to have twoo advantages above gentlemen by birth onely. The first is, vertue, the other curtesie, the right ornament of a Gentleman: For of curtesie and gentlenes he is termed a gentleman.

GUAZ. When a man is gentle both by birth and vertue, I see not what may be added more unto him, and yet besides those two sortes of Gentlemen, you have set downe a third kinde of right or absolute gentlemen. By which termes

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

you put me in minde of *aqua vitæ*, and such like, which are three times stilled.

ANNIB. Like as in the third distillation is bestowed greater charge, and more excellent matter ariseth of it, so in these absolute gentlemen there are required greater giftes, and greater perfection they are indued withall. To be short, I call those absolute gentlemen, who to their gentrie by byrth and vertue, have great riches joyned : which serve greatly to the maintenance of gentrie.

GUAZ. You have now opened my eyes, and I know that I was not before thorowly awaked. I see now apparantly that there is nothing maketh gentry more bright, and shining, then the brightnesse of gold and silver : wherin a man may say there consisteth another kind of gentrie.

ANNIB. In prooffe of that which you say, some would have it, that riches should make gentrie, but I cannot thinke them to have so great force, for that were to debase gentry too much. But I may be bolde to say this, that though riches can adde no degree to gentrie, yet they are a readie instrument to put in practise certain vertues belonging to gentrie : and especially liberalitie, wherby gentry, like a glasse stricken with the beames of the sun, is made more bright and shining. And therfore these absolut gentlemen make themselves seene above al other. Wherof are to be seene particuler examples in those cities, where there are universities or schooles. For there gentlemen of great welth will shew themselves above a great number of other schollers. Yet perchance they are no better borne nor indued with better conditions then the other are, and yet by reason of their riches they are more accounted of. And as a precious stone set in fine gold and curiously wrought is more goodly to sight, then another that lacketh the workmanship, so those gentlemen which keepe open housholde, which have a great train after them, and which spend much and freely, are much more esteemed of the other common scholers, who are gentlemen to, and yet those former are honored and courted of them.

GUAZ. In conclusion the power of riches is great, and a man may see that al things are in subjection to monie.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

ANNIB. It is shewed unto us by an Epigram translated
out of greeke which was uttered the other day in the
Academy, and is this :

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

Epicarmes custome was
amongst the Gods to place,
The earth, the water and the winde,
and Sunne with shining face,
The starres and the fire,
but as for mee I take,
Silver and golde to be the Gods,
which most for men doe make :
To yeele them their content,
and if thou them possesse,
Of houses, landes, servantes, and friendes,
thou shalt have great excesse.
And if thou freely wilt,
in bribes thy coyne bestowe,
Both judge, and jurie will bee prest,
all favour thee to shoue :
Yea Gods from heaven will hither come,
all honour thee to doe.

GUAZ. It is said, that golde breaketh the gates of Diamant, and that the tongue hath no force when gold speaketh.

ANNIB. Wee will say then according to these opinions, that where power and riches are greatest, their gentry is greatest : and perhaps it was therfore that Caligula the Emperour hearing certain princes reason of Nobilitie, said, That it belonged only to an absolute prince, meaning, that it was proper only to the Emperour. But laying apart these opinions, I am of this mind, that riches joyned with good birth, and good conditions, make not a man an absolute gentleman, if they bee not accompanied with that royall vertue, called magnificence, and if hee bestow not those riches bountifully as is meete for his estate.

GUAZ. If you will have riches to be a helpe to gentry, it shal behove a man rather to be saving, that he may be able to keepe himselfe rich, for according to the saying of the Poet,

The vertue is no lesse to keepe, then for to get.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

And I remember I have heard tel how a king of Fraunce going to see the lodgings and roomes of a faire house belonging to the steward of his houshold, said, That the kitchin was a great deale too litle, in respect of the greatnesse of the house, but the steward answered him, that, that small kitchin had made the house so great.

ANNIB. It is wel doone to know how a man spendeth, but I altogether mislike covetousnes, which is an enemy to gentry, and a token of a base minde. And heere I woulde have you call to minde some rich Gentlemen, who having, or (to speak more properly) possessing much riches, suffer nothing but smoke to goe foorth of their houses : and as if they were driven to it of necessitie, goe with a pielde threede bare cloke on their backe, with a gresie Cap on their head, their hose torne and patcht, neither can they any way excuse their miserablenes, but by saying we are known wel enough, we either have better, or wee may have better : and having a horse in the stable, yet they think they may honestly enough walk on foot. I am sure you cannot abide that these gentlemen should stande upon their gentry, so muche as those which keepe a worshipful house, open as wel to strangers, as to their neighbours, and chiefly, to the poore and honest : whiche they are bounde to doe (being able) thereby to mainteine the name and worship of the auncestours, and to shewe themselves their lawefull successours. To bee short, riches well bestowed, are a great ornament, and setting foorth to a gentleman.

GUAZ. The harder is the state of poore Gentlemen, who are constrained by necessitie to live like owles in the darke.

ANNIB. Amongst other inconveniences, and discomforties, which povertie bringeth to a Gentleman, this is one, and no small one, that he is some times driven to match him selfe in marriage with some woman of base parentage, by reason whereof, his blood is corrupted, and his children degenerate, who after follow the nature of neither father nor mother.

GUAZ. Though our Boccace mainteine that povertie taketh not away gentry, yet in my opinion, it doeth at

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

least dismember it, weaken it, disfurnish it, turne it into it dublet, yea, and strippeth it starke naked.

ANNIB. Some of those poore gentlemen are to be pitied, to wit, those who by some mischance and evill hap, not by their owne fault, are become poore and low. But those are worthy blame, who knowing themselves to be poore, indeavour not while they are yong, either by learning, either by war, either by service, to withstand povertie, which they know to be the overthrow of gentry. But you know there are many, whom their noble birth maketh ignoble: For they think, in that they are borne gentlemen, they never need seeke other reputation or countenance. And if you doe but looke about these mountaines without going any farther, you shall see some houses so ful of Gentlemen, al companions and equalles in this seigneorry, that every one of them hath scarce a little hole to shrowd himselfe in: and they come at diverse doores so thick as it were conies out of a Berrie. And grounding themselves altogether upon that little smoke of gentle birth, they suffer themselves to be restie as it were like Bacon with ydlenesse: or else to be carried through necessitie to commit shamefull and dishonest deedes. * So that it may be sayd, that by resting in their seigneorry, they loose their gentry: yea, and now and then, loose both the one and the other.* It is not long since, that a friend of mine of Moncalvo told me he sawe at the market a poore wretch, who having brought thither an Asse loaden with wood, when hee that would have bought it of him, offered him lesse then he liked to sell it for, he sware by the fayth of a Gentleman that he had solde another loade for a great deale more money, mary he would sell the same somewhat better cheape.

GUAZ. I would sooner have beleevd him if hee had sworne by the eare of the Asse. But perchance hee made himselfe beleve that to leade an Asse to the market to serve his owne turne, was no staine to his gentry.

ANNIB. There are some which hold with these (misers rather then Gentlemen) saying, that to do such thinges for a mans owne behoofe, doeth not derogate so much from

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

his gentrie, as if he did it for hire, and for the service of others : and they alleage for themselves the example of a Philosopher, who being found fault withall for carying fish under his cloke, answered, that it was for his owne eating : inferring thereby, that (according to the proverbe) it is an yl horse that wil not carie his owne provender.

GUAZ. I thinke I have also hearde that in some countries, he which with his owne handes tylleth his grounde or doeth any other worke belonging to husbandry, looseth not thereby one iote of his gentry. But for my parte I wil alwaiese pray, good Lord deliver mee from such kind of gentry.

ANNIB. Therein, as I have alredie said, wee must have regarde to the Custome of the Countrie, and it shalbe no marvell at al unto us, to see in some townes certaine gentlemen (contrary to the order of other townes) goe to the Butchery, and Market, and buy victuals, and cary in their handkerchiefes or table napkins, salades, fruite, fish, or some other small trifle.

GUAZ. For my part, I woulde bee loth to doe so, and I had rather live only with dry bread.

ANNIB. Neither doe I (I promise you) like of that fashion, but wee must beare somewhat with povertie, which perchaunce forceth them to it, or els perhaps it hath been an ancient use amongst them, and the time may come, that it shal bee left. But to returne to our purpose, the richer a gentleman is, the greater he is. For riches no doubt cary credite and favour with them, for when the rich speaketh, every one keepeth silence, but when the poore speaketh, it is saide, what fellow is that ? And therefore let us hold as an Oracle the saying of Horace,

Birth and good qualities are nothing worth,
if riches from them bee shut foorth.

And for conclusion of our discourse, we will say that a man is established, and set in the highest and surest degree of gentrie, when his seat is upholden with these three most strong feet, good birth, good qualities, and riches.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. I like very well of your witty distinction, but for that you said not long agoe, that curtesie and gentlenes is the chiefe ornament of a gentleman, it commeth now in my mind to aske you whether a Gentleman by birth; degenerating from his auncestours, and from his owne nature, using neither curtesie nor vertue, may rightly be tearmed a Gentleman.

ANNIB. Though curtesie necessarily appertain to a gentleman, yet you see it is wanting in the most part of those which are gentlemen born, which commeth to passe for the reason alredy given. But touching those, who not only want the gentlemanly instinct, but besides live dissolutly, I can say no more, but that a man borne wel, and living yll, is a monstrous thing, and worthie to be abhorred. And it is a common saying, That gentry standeth the evill in as much steed, as a looking glasse doth to a blind man. But to satisfie more fully your demaund, I wil conclude this matter with another common distinction, according to which it is saide, that there are Gentlemen of Gentlemen, Gentlemen of base, and base of Gentlemen. Gentlemen of Gentlemen are those, who, descending of worthy ancestours, tread in their steps. Gentle of base, are those who extracted from loe parentage, raise themselves to gentry by their vertue. Base of gentle are those, who degenerating from the vertue of their forefathers, are become naught, and vicious. But it is high time to think of the rest of the matters which we are to intreate of this day, and to consider what is to be observed in the conversation of gentlemen and yomen together.

GUAZ. I see by you then, you meane to alow them to company together, but in my opinion, suche company, and such confusion is not good. And you see that most commonly gentlemen resort to their equals, and that if they accompany with yeomen, and those which are their inferiours (if urgent busines drive them not to it) they are discommended, and little esteemed of other Gentlemen.

ANNIB. There are many gentlemen, who not understanding what gentry is, thinke it an evil and infamous thing not

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

to be a gentleman, and therefore they flie from it as from the plague, and they think it no lesse shame to be seene in the company of the baser sort, then to be taken in the common stewes: not knowing that there is no more difference betweene the gentleman and the yeoman, then there is between two bricke made of self same earth: whereof the one is set in the top of a towre, the other in the bottome of a wel. Yet there are some gentlemen of better disposition, who frequenting for the most part, the company of gentlemen, take no scorne when occasion serveth to accept of the company of those which are no gentlemen. Nowe in these same differences in my judgement, the first, by bending the bow too much, breake it in sunder, and by shutting up the treasure of gentrie too closely, shew a kind of incivilitie and churlishnesse, odious not onely to the worlde, but to God him selfe: for that they vouchsafe not for brothers, and companions, those whom hee avoucheth for his children. The other, in my minde doe two acts of gentrie, in that accompanying with Gentlemen they degenerate not from their kinde, and frequenting the meaner sort, they expresse that gentlenes and curtesie which is proper to a Gentleman. According to that philosophical and Christian saying, That the more loftie we are placed, the more lowly wee ought to humble our selves: which is in deed, the way to ryse higher. Besides, the gentleman which useth the companie of his inferiours, giveth, and receiveth singuler pleasure: For that they are marvellous wel apaid when they see a Gentleman, notwithstanding the inequality, which is betweene them, to make him selfe their equall. Whereby they are induced to love him, to honor him, and to doe him service: and whereby they themselves winne credite, and are the better esteemed of by their equals. But the pleasure which the gentleman receiveth is a great deale more, who conversing with other Gentlemen, is faine to frame himself ofttimes to their fancie: knowing that every one will looke for as much preheminance every way as himselfe, but in consorting with his inferiours, he shalbe the chief man amongst them, and rule the companie as he list, neither shal be

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

forced to say or do any thing contrary to his minde : which libertie is seldome allowed him, being amongst his equals.

GUAZ. And for that purpose, when I chaunce to goe abroade to recreate my selfe, I accompany my self more commonly with one that is inferiour to me, then with my equal : For with my equall, I must for good manner sake, seeke rather to follow his mind then mine owne, and make as though I liked of that, which liketh me nothing at all, going with my feete sometime thither whyther I go not with my hart. But I doe with my inferiour what I list, and dispose of him at my pleasure, so that I finde the companie of my equals to be as it were servitude, and of my inferiours, libertie.

ANNIB. You have reason, and therfore you see that for the most part a gentleman maketh his abode in a village or Maner, wherof he is lord, where he seemeth to be a king : for that he is there obeyed, and nothing done contrarie to his pleasure. Which he shall not have in a Citie, where hee is no more then other Citizens are, and where he is much lesse respected.

GUAZ. Seeing you will not that a man shall refuse the companie of the meaner sort, I thinke it needefull to shewe, which of them are chiefly to be admitted into company.

ANNIB. When neede shall require, it shall not be amisse to consort with all sortes of persons, though of never so base condition : which Diogenes ment to shew, who being asked, why he went to drinke at the Taverne, answered, I likewise goe to be powled in the Barbers shop. And there upon wee see that divers Gentlemen of this Citie, are not ashamed to be seene in the open street talking with divers workmen, Artificers, and handiecraftes men, for necessities appertaining to their house and housholde. But if necessitie constraine us not, we ought not to admit into our companie others then those, who, though they be not Gentlemen by birth and calling, yet have civilitie in their behaviour, and wit in their talke, which maketh them differ altogether from the common sort. And touching Gentlemen, it behooveth them to knowe, that they are subject to

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

some infirmities, amongst the which, arrogancie is one, which is too commonly used, especially by Gentlemen of the first sorte, who have nothing to stande uppon, but the good house they come of. And therefore laying aside their loftie lookes, they ought to beholde their inferiours with a more gracious eye, and to use curtesie towardses them, which as we said before, is proper to Gentlemen, and by meanes whereof, they get the good will of their worsers. Otherwise, let them be sure they shall incense the whole people against them, and consequently, by the common voice of the people to be verie yll spoken of. Besides, to contemne the meaner sort, may sometimes doe a man great displeasure : as it did to a Citizen of Rome, of the house of the Scipioes, who, while hee laboured to be one of the Officers called Aediles, met with a country fellowe, whom hee tooke by the hande, which feeling to bee rough and harde brauned, he scoffingly askt him whether hee used to goe with his handes or with his feete, which set the husbandman in such a rage against him, that like fire amongst flaxe, he stirred up the whole people against him, and so wrought the matter, that for lacke of voices, hee went without the office he stooode for, and to his great shame, hee learned howe hatefull and hurtfull a thing it is for a brave gentleman, to mocke and scorne a simple soule of the country. * Wherefore let not a gentleman brave over those which are no gentlemen, but let him remember that his gentrie tooke beginning of one who was no gentleman. Which is given us to understand by the Poet, which saieth,

The first, who ere he was,
of whom thy race did growe,
Some shepheard was, or els some such,
whose name I will not shewe.

Moreover, let him remember that Gentlemen were admonished by Christ that they should not be puft up with vain glorie, for so much as they ought to say with the common sort (Our father which art in heaven) which they can not say with a pure and unfained heart, if they take not

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

yeomen and poore men for their brothers. To be short, they ought to print this in their heartes, that no man is to be commended for the gentrie of his auncestours, nor to bee reprehended for their basenesse. And they must knowe, that hee which despiseth the unnoble, despiseth his first fathers, and consequently, his owne selfe. Wherefore it is the part of a Gentleman to behave him selfe so gently and curteously in all his dooinges, * that out of his eyes, tongue, and maners, his gentlemanly minde may shewe forth.* And he that is not willing to take this course, must content him selfe to be a Gentleman only in his owne conceite, for hee may not looke that any man els will take him so. Nowe touching the unnoble or yeomen, they must not for all this, thinke them selves without imperfection, for many of them have an infirmitie more greevous and pernicious then any before rehearsed : which is, that they will not acknowledge and confesse themselves inferiour to Gentlemen, both by nature, fortune, and vertue : not knowing that amongst the seven degrees of superioritie, this is particularly set downe of Gentlemen over the baser sorte, who by all reason ought to submitte themselves to their will and pleasure. As then by some infirmitie of the eyes, if it bee not soone healed, a man quickly becommeth blinde, so of this imperfection in the common people, some of them fall into suche blinde arrogancie, and so foolish a vaine, that they wil not sticke to vaunt themselves to be that which they are not, and both in their talke and in their apparel brave it out like Gentlemen.

GUAZ. A goodly matter I promise you when men will goe about (as our Boccace sayth) to make an Orenge tree of a briry bush. In my minde those which extol themselves in woordes and bragge of their birth, rather disgrace themselves then otherwise. Like the poore drudge brought in in the Comedie, who tolde that his father was a goldsmith, and being asket what worke hee did belonging to that occupation, answered, that hee set stones in mortar. Or like the mule who being demaunded of his birth, and beeing ashamed to say that hee was an Asses sonne, answered,

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

that hee was a horses cosin. But this fault of chaunging and faigning of names and callings, in my fancie is more used in our countrie then in any other. And if you marke the Spaniardes heere with us (notwithstanding two moneths before they had not a shoe to put on their foote, and confessed themselves to bee poore and needie) yet when they have pickt up their crummes a little, they will bee maister one of another, and use great honour and ceremonies, to the ende that wee should the better account of them. I thinke they durst not doe this in their owne countrie, but heere they are bolde to doe it, for that they see it ordinarily done amongst us : and that hee will boast himselfe to come of an auncient house, whose father never so much as came in place where a Gentleman had been. You shal see other some, being the children of coblers and pedlers, who having gotten a little wealth, take upon them very bigly, and become most currish and cruel.

ANNIB. Doe you not know the saying of the Poet, that

There is no rigour like to his,
who from lowe state extolled is.

GUAZ. And therefore I thinke the example verie rare, yea, and singular of King Agathocles : who, being a Potters sonne, would alwayes eate his meate in earthen vessell, to the end, that having alwayes freshe in minde his fathers obscurenesse, hee shoulde take no pride of his owne greatnesse. But howe litle is this example followed by many riche Pesantes, who are not ashamed to attire them selves like Gentlemen, to weare weapons by their side, and suche like ornaments, which are proper only to gentlemen : before whom they will make no curtesie to take place. And this abuse is so in use at this day in Italy, that as well in men as women, a man can discern no difference in estates. And you shal see the Clownes will be as brave as the Artificers, the Artificers as the Merchantes, and the Merchantes as the Gentlemen. In so muche that a Taylour using to weare weapons, and to be appareled like a Gentleman, is not knowne what hee is, untill he be seene sowing in his shop.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

But you shall not see this disorder and confusion in Fraunce, where, by auncient custome severall apparell is worne, according to everie ones calling. So that by the garments only, you may know whether a woman be the wife of an Artificer, a Merchaunt, or Gentleman : And which is more, by the apparel, you shall knowe a difference betweene Gentlewomen them selves, for some attire is proper to Ladies, and those that attende in the Court uppon some Queene or Princesse, likewise to the wives of Presidentes, Counsellours, and principal Magistrates, which neverthesse is not allowed to everie Gentlewoman.

ANNIB. Our abuse herein is in deede insupportable, and requireth that Princes should put their handes hereto, and cut the combes of these clownish cockscombes, and make them come downe from their degree of gentrie, by forcing them to weare suche apparell as may bee at least different from Gentlemen, if they will needes have it as costly, for besides, that under such a maske there may be much falsehood wrought, it is reasonable also, that as princes would finde themselves greeved with gentlemen if they would preferre themselves before them any way, so they ought not to suffer the honour and degree of gentrie to be disgraced by the presumption of malapert clownes. But bee it that there were no way to refourme that abuse, yet those who are gentlemen indeede, ought not to be mooved with the matter, but rather to laugh at it. For the Asse which put on the Lyons skin (thinking that thereby his maister woulde more respect him) was knowne for an Asse, and used like an Asse. Now for so much as in this matter of civile conversation, we have not undertaken to speake of the manner of apparell, wee will leave this digression, and come to conclude, that yeomen ought to know their degree, and by a certaine kinde of humilitie to shew themselves inferiours to Gentlemen in doing them reverence : Assuring themselves, that as by fancy presumption they make themselves hated, so by lowly humilitie, they make themselves loved of Gentlemen.

But I see well now we have stayed so long uppon the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

discourse touching Gentlemen, that wee shall bee faine to passe over lightly and briefly the conversation of princes.

GUAZ. Nay rather it were requisite that you made thereof a long speech, for that the faultes of Princes are many and more greivous then those of private persons : if the Poet say true, which sayth,

The more infectious is the fault,
and followed of the moe,
By how much higher he is plast,
That doeth yll sample showe.

And if you marke it well, an evill Prince doeth not onely suffer himselfe to be corrupted, but besides hee corrupteth others : for that his subjectes take delight to follow his fashions, and thinke it not onely tollerable, but very resonable to conforme them selves to their heade. By reason whereof they doe more harme by their example, then by their offence.

ANNIB. I had rather wee might say nothing at all of this matter. For there want not writers, both of the times past and present, who have taken the courage and the care to instruct princes, and to set downe thorowely what their life and conversation ought to be. Besides wee are to consider, that it pertaines not to us to speake of their dooinges, which are yrreprehensible and incomprehensible. And to speake my fancie freely, I have alwayes blamed in my mynde, those which will appoint lawes and orders of life to Princes, who are Lordes over Lawes, and injoyne them to others. And therefore by my will wee will not * apply the humilitie of our Philosophie to the Majestie of Princes : * for that beeing Gods on earth, it is to bee thought, that all which they doe is done well : and that to reason of and call into question their dooinges, is nothing else, but with the Gyants, to lay siege to heaven.

GUAZ. I perceive well, that according to the Proverb you love to stand farre of from Jupiter, and lightning, being assured that no man shall accuse you for that you shall not say, and me thinkes you have regarde to that which is

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

sayde by one, That to reprehend princes it is dangerous, and to commend them, plaine lying.

ANNIB. It is so farre of, that I meant to signifie any such thing, that I did not so much as think it. For being perswaded that they holde of the divinitie, I thinke they cannot easily erre or commit acte woorthie reprehension. Neyther can I choose but laugh at certaine curious fellowes, who discoursing of the affaires of the worlde, and not knowing the hidden secretes of the deepe devises of the Pope, the Emperour, the king or great Turke make of their doings a thousande wrong and fond interpretations, being farre wide of their thoughtes: And they perswade them selves that princes are fooles, that they live at all adventures without advyse and counsayle, and that matters should goe better, if they themselves were Princes.

GUAZ. The stinges of those which eate their bread, and live in one selfe court with them, are farre more pricking to Princes, then of those which stande so farre of, descanting upon their dooings. Whereuppon a certaine king used to say, that hee was like a Plane tree, under whose boughes, while the weather is foule, many shroude themselves, but when fayre weather commeth, they pull it uppe by the rootes, so hee gave succour to many whiche were afflicted with the stormes of trouble and miserie, who afterwarde when the winde of prosperitie began once to blowe with them, bended themselves to his ruine and overthrowe.

ANNIBALL. Do you thinke that Princes are ignorant of it?

GUAZ. No I warrant you, for like Gods they knowe not onely what men say, but what they thinke. But belike to their divine knowledge to tell what men thinke, and to their delicate eares to heare what men say, they lacke sharpe and pearcing tongues to tell those of their faultes, which abuse them.

ANNIB. Those which dare abuse Princes seeme never to have read that verse,

Knowest not that Princes hands, will reach a great way of.

Neither to knowe that the eares of the Asse fastened to

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

Midas, meane that he easilie understoode what every man sayde and did. They knowe not also that Princes partake with the devine power, being able to pull downe the mighty and set up the weake.

GUAZ. Yea, but if Princes woulde punishe such fellowes, they shoulde doe a deede of justice. But I see wel that in this point they had rather conforme themselves to divine mercy, then to due justice. For commonly they wil not once have the matter called in question.

ANNIB. That is the right act of a Prince, and therefore it is well saide, That the Egle catcheth not flies.

GUAZ. Say also hardly, that they are so farre of from taking punishment of suche fellowes, that many times they doe most good to those, who speake most evill of them.

ANNIB. Weighing belike that the good will bee content with enough, and that they are sure alwayes to be in league with them, but the yll being insatiable, they thinke it needefull to give them one dishe above commons, to stoppe their mouthes. Nowe for so much as the great mysteries of Princes are not easie to be discovered, it shal suffice us to know, that * though some of them fall out yll (which I will not denie) yet for the most part wee see they are good,* and according to the Proverbe, have alwayes an eye on the Scepter : neither doe at any time any thing which any man, no not Momus him selfe, may justly finde fault withall, or which is not to be well thought of by all. Behold for example, the reverent and redoubted majestie of the King of Spain, wherby filling mens heartes with the reverence of him, he is as it were adored like an Idole of Princes and Potentates, and you will yelde unto mee, that with great vertue hee maketh him selfe knowne for a King, and with great dignitie maintaineth his royall estate. Laye before your eyes the milde and gracious countenaunce of the most Christian King of Fraunce, his incredible curtesie and affabilitie, whereby as I heare, and as you ought to knowe, he maketh him selfe loved and obeyed, rather of his familiars and friendes, then servantes and subjectes, and you will

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

say, that by that humilitie he exalteth his royall throne, if it might possibly bee raysed higher. Present to your viewe (if your eyes bee able to beholde it without dazeling) the famous government of the Queene of England, by the reverence is borne her by strangers, the obedience by her subjectes, the feare of some, the love of all, her stoutnesse in contemning her enemies, her stayednesse in sticking to her friendes, her pollicie in preventing perils, her clemency in punishing offences, her provident care for her countrey, her tender love towardes her people, her exalting of the good, her disgracing of the ill, her singular humilitie in most soveraigne majestie, her stayed temperancy in most flourishing prosperity, her rare modestie accompanied with exquisite learning, her maidenly chastity, joyned with heavenly beautie, to be short, her unspeakable perfection in al things, and you wil say that spight it selfe can not deface her doings any way, and that in spight of spight shee will triumph over all yll tongues, yea and over al those which envie her happinesse : you will say with Aristotle, that prudency is only proper to Princes, and with the scripture, that Princes heartes are in the hand of God, and that hee doeth direct them by his divine wisdom.

GLAZ. Why how now Gentleman, what tempest of affection hath caried you thus away into the commendation of a Prince, whom you never saw, nor to whom you are beholding any way ? I must and will say in deed that shee is the rarest woman of the world, I must confesse her government to be most glorious, and the commendations which you give her to be both due and true : but yet I must say, that like a merchant willing to set forth his ware, you have blazed forth her perfections, but you have concealed her faultes : you have made no mention how shee hath banished out of her country the auctoritie of our holy father the Pope, howe throughout all her dominions she hath planted a religion different from the faith which wee and our forefathers have been alwayes trayned up in : Which faultes are so foule, that like a spot in a gorgeous garment, they are a great blemishe to the brightnesse of her renowme.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

But were shee voide of them, I could not then but say with you, that shee were to be thought rather a heavenly Goddess, then an earthly Princesse.

ANN. If there be nothing else to keepe her from heaven but her religion, no doubt but shee shal goe thither so soone as God shal plague her subjects so sore as to take her from them: For I can tell you this, that the most learned men in the worlde are of this opinion, that her religion is the very high way to heaven. And though for my part I make no account of it, for that I know it not, neither meane to deale in matters of religion, for that I professe it not, yet if a tree bee knowne by it fruites, no doubt but this tree is good, which bringeth forth such fruits, as the like are not to be found in the whole world againe: As first, a Prince indued with such pietie, such puritie, such good giftes, such rare vertue, that shee may bee a patterne for all Princes to practise by: then grave and wise Counsellours, referring all their thoughts and doings to Gods glory, to their Princes safetie, and their countries commodity. Next, a wel disposed and orderly comminaltie, ruled as much by religion as law, obeying as wel for conscience as for feare: And last of al, continual peace and quietnesse, which is a singuler blessing of God, and an undoubted signe, that hee lyketh wel of her religion, and is wel pleased with her proceedings.

GUAZ. If you can gather so much goodnesse out of that whiche I objected against her as a fault, I will heereafter finde no more fault with her, but honour her as one without all fault. Therefore I pray you returne to the matter wee have in hande.

ANNIB. I say then (as I saide before) that therefore you ought to thinke that al the purposes and proceedings of princes are grounded uppon discretion and judgement, and that they doe all thinges better then wee are able to proportion them out unto them: of whom I may say that whiche King Leonidas saide, to whom as one objected, Thy kingdome excepted, thou hast nothing more then wee: Yea, answered hee, but I had not been King, if I had not been better then you.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. That fellowe coulde not bee without a reply to beate backe the nayle againe: but perchaunce he liked better to yeelde with his tongue, then with his heart, by the example of the Peacocke, who saide the Eagle was a fayrer byrde then hee, not in respect of his feathers, but of his beake and talents, which caused that no other birde durst stand in contention with him.

ANNIB. Well, I say to you againe, that the dooings of Princes are blamelesse, altogether without the compasse of our judgement, and alwaies mistaken of us: for those whom we take to be cruell, are just: those whom we suppose to use extremity in justice, use lenitie in mercy: those who ordeining new and extraordinary imposts and paiments are thought to bee covetous, deserve rather to be counted provident and wise, for that they are not moved thereto by avarice, which cannot enter into their noble hearts, but for the conservation of their owne estates, and their people. So that the imperfection of our judgements maketh us take all their perfections cleane contrary.

GUAZ. I know not how you can attribute these perfections to all Princes, seeing the histories are full of naughty Emperours and Kings, which lived most wickedly.

ANNIB. I doe confesse it unto you, neither do I marvell any thing at it, for that they were not Princes by nature, but by violence, neither had they any knowledge of Gods worde, yea and were rather feared then loved: whereby they themselves were forced to feare others, and to keepe them upon their gardes, for he that will be feared, must of force feare those whiche feare him. To bee short, they were unjust, disloyall, covetous, lascivious, which rewarded the evill, and persecuted the good, who for a kingdomes sake woulde have it lawfull to breake all lawes, and they were those in reproch of whom the fable is told of the Lion, who entred into agreement with other beasts, that like good fellowes they should distribute the prayes which they tooke amongst them al indifferently. But afterward, every one comming to demaund his part, he shewed them his teeth, saying, The first part is mine, because I am better

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

then you : I wil have the second, for that I am more mightie then you : the third, by reason is due unto me, for that I tooke more paine in the taking of it then you : and for the fourth, if you wil not give it me, I will have it spight of your teeth, and so farewell frendship. And therefore it is not to bee marvelled at, that these tyrants for the most part died of some violent death, by sword, or by poyson. On the other side you know that the princes of our time, come to their crownes either naturally by succession, or lawefully by election, that they are Christians, and indued with the knowledge of the trueth : that they are sente by God, to maintaine justice on the earth, to defend us from oppression, to repress the insolent, to rejecte flatterers, to respect the vertuous, to gratifie the good, and to shew themselves both in worde and deede, no lesse stayed and unmoveable, then the corner stone, or the celestiall Pole.

GUAZ. But for all this, it would like me well (seeing you deny not, but that there are some Princes subjecte to some infirmities) that following your course, you woulde give some preceptes, touching the conversation betweene Princes and private persons, that our discourses may be insufficient in no parte.

ANNIB. For so much as you wil have mee, contrarie to my determination, to speake of this matter, I will binde my selfe onely to matters of most importaunce, and I will leave to you (who are well experienced in the disposition and qualities of Princes) to give judgement what belongeth to them in every poynt. There are then two special imperfections in Princes, wherby they soone come to loose honour, state, lyfe, soule, and all together. The first is, Ignorance, which carieth a Prince into many inconveniences. And surely it is a great abuse, that Princes have not the knowledge of good letters, but are faigne to use that shift, which an Emperour used, who being reprov'd, for that he spake contrary to the rules of Grammer : answered, that if an Emperour were above the lawes, much more was he above the rules of Grammer. But he shewed thereby, that hee knew not that there is nothing more behoofull for the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

upholding of Empires and kingdomes then learning. For we must thinke that a Prince void of learning, must needes either behave himself disorderly in his government: for that according to the saying of the Philosopher, ignorance joyned with puissance, bringeth forth madnesse: or els like an infant, he must refer himself wholly to the discretion of others: as the Emperour Galba did, who though he were not altogether without learning, yet he gave himselfe in pray to 3 of his officers commonly called the Schoole-maisters of Galba, who nurtured him in naughtinesse, and were the cause of his overthrowe.

GUAZ. Thereupon it is saide, that as that Prince doth ill which dealeth in matters of his owne head without advise, so hee doeth scarce wel which suffreth himselfe to bee overruled by others, and of a maister becommeth a servant. And it is a great chaunce when the Officers see the Prince so very a childe, but that they will conspire to cosin him, to set his honour to sale, and to make a very jest and laughing stocke of him.

ANNIB. Thereuppon it is sayde that a Countrie is in better case where the Prince is evil, then where his friends and officers are evil. Nowe I will speake of the second imperfection, whiche is covetousnesse, which being once entred into a Princes heart, there is no mischief, cruelty, impietie, or wickednesse, whiche it will not perswade him too: yea even to make sale of Offices and of Justice, to fyle his handes with the vile gaine of some things, whiche very private persons would be ashamed to medle withal, and to seeke to have about him such fetching heads, who consume themselves in a manner away, in devising new kinds of extortion and polling, and to set it forth with some goodly title. So that indued with this insatiable mind, he is alway ready to procure that the exchequer may bee filled full, and the countrie emptied cleane. Of which fault it followeth, that he living alwayes miserable, full of suspicion and feare, with a sword still hanging by a heare over his head, hee taketh at one tyme from his subjects libertie, from himselfe safetie, from both tranquillitie.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. Nowe I will say you give to an ill Prince that honour which is due unto him, and I see not why wee ought not as freely to blame the il, as to commend the good, whom God long preserve. But returning to the infirmitie of covetousnesse, I thinke it much more molesteth and tormenteth the higher sorte, then the meaner or lower: and that many Princes have ingraven in their heartes the desire of some kingdome, which when they have obtained, yet neverthesse they are never the more satisfied, but grow stil in desire of some other: so that this saying may bee verified in them, Alexander seemeth great to the worlde, but the world seemeth small to Alexander.

ANNIB. In trueth Alexander ought to be counted poore, or rather wretched: for that hee which is not content with that hee hath, hath never a whit more, then hee, who hath nothing at all. That Prince then, which coveteth to bee well spoken off, and wel thought off by his subjectes, wil take heede of those two faultes before named: and that through his ignoraunce, when matters come in consultation, hee may not sitte amongst his counsaylours, like a dumbe dogge, hee will endeavour himselfe first, to lay holde of learning and wisdom: whereof hee sheweth an undoubted signe, in making account of those, who are learned and wise.

GUAZ. Arestinus being askt, why fewe Princes nowadayes extende their liberalitie to those that are excellent in Poetrie or other artes, as they were wont to doe in times past: answered, for that their conscience giveth them how unworthy they are of the prayses which by Poets are given unto them: and for other artes, it is dayly seene, that a man maketh no account of that, which hee knoweth not. Therefore I would in any wise have a Prince learned, both for this and other causes, by you alleaged.

ANNIB. Amongst all the learning meete for a Prince, that is the chieftest, which intreateth of matters of state and government: And therefore it is sayde, that Demetrius exhorted Ptolomey to reade many books pertaining to government, for that there hee should finde many thinges

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

whiche his subjectes durst not tell him. Next, it behooveth a Prince to flye above all thinges, that before named, Covetousnesse, as the head of all mischiefe: not to suffer so vile and so unworthy a guest to lodge in his house, and to put off a private person, and put on a publike, referring all his cogitations to the benefit of his people. Besides this, that hee consider with himselfe, how heavily a Scepter and Crowne doe waygh, and if hee aspyre to the kingdome, in hope of a more secure life, hee immitateth him, who clymbeth to the toppe of a high hyll, in hope to save himselfe from lightning and tempest: where upon one with great reason tearmed the lyfe of a Prince, a glorious miserie: an other called it, a noble bondage: naming moreover, a good king, a publike servaunt. And Tiberius, (as I remember) named the Empiere, a great beast: Insomuch, that if every man would ponder in his minde the paynes, the watchinges, the labours, the perilles, the vexations, and finally the weightie charge a careful Prince is subject to, it should not perhaps be seene, that two would strive and goe to war for one kingdome, but they would rather content themselves to bee ruled, then to rule: wherupon a wise Prince knowing the waigh and daunger of so heavy a burthen, which hee alone for want of strength and knowledge is not able to beare, provideth himselfe of officers and counsaylours, who are seene as well in civill, as marciall affayres, for the execution of Justice, and conservation of his own state: Remembring the Proverbe, that an evill Prince, hath evill sides: that is, evill counsaylours. And therefore in making this choyce, he taketh good advisement, providing so neere as he can, that they be endued with honestie and learning. Wherein Phillip, king of Macedon was so presise and circumspect, that onely having found out, that one of his officers died his beard, he put him forth of his office: sayinge, that hee coulde not bee true and faythfull in publike matters, who wrought trecherie with his owne beard. Besides, he will never conclude any thing without their advice, especially, when justice is to be executed in any thing: remembring how it is sayde, that when Jupiter was

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

minded to bestowe any benefit upon mortal creatures, hee did it of himselfe, but when hee was disposed to doe harme, either by lightning, tempest, warre, plague, earthquake, or such like, hee assembled the rest of the Gods, and wrought his vengeance by their advise. The Emperour Antonius also used to say, It is more meet that I folow the counsaile of so many and such good friends, then to suffer all them to followe the fancie of mee alone. A Prince likewise must indeavour to surmount his subjects, not in ydlenesse, but in industrie and forecast. And as the celestial things can not stande stil, but with continual mooving take force : so hee ought alway to exercise and travaile himselfe in governing his subjects with justice, and in looking to their welfare and profite, in such sorte, that hee fulfil the saying of the Emperour Adrian, which was, that a kingdom was to be used as a thing belonging to the people, not to the Prince himselfe. Furthermore, let him be sure to get the good wil of his subjects, which is the sure and inexpugnable strength of a realme, which good wil hee shal get, folowing the opinon of Titus Vespasianus, shewing himselfe suche towards his subjectes, as hee coveteth to have them towards him. And as there is nothing more hurtfull then to bee hated, so is there nothing more helpefull then to bee loved. Which no doubt is gotten with gentlenesse and curtesie, and therefore no mervayle though that Vespasian by a generall consent were called the jewell of the world, and the darling of mankind, for that hee was alwayes ready to give audience to all men, and not to suffer any to depart out of his sight unsatisfied.

GUAZ. There is no other thing in trueth that maketh the golden world, but the goodnesse of Princes.

ANNIB. A prince must not only shew himself curteous, affable, and gracious, in conversing with his subjects, but besides, must use his authority modestly, especially in offences committed against himselfe : wherin it ought to suffice him that he might have taken vengeance : and to imitate those mighty and strong beasts, which never turne againe against litle cures which run barking after them.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

Remembring the saying of Cato, that the mighty ought to use their power moderately, that they may use it continually. Whereuppon Trajane used to call the Senate Father, and him selfe their servant. But to use a worde for all, wee will say, that a good Prince ought to purchase to him selfe the name of the father of his Countrey, and not to beare himselfe otherwise towards his subjectes, then a father doeth towards his sonnes. And for so much as out of the example of Cyrus in Xenophon, and of many others, may bee perfectly gathered the precepts pertaining to a Prince, it shalbe enough for us to adde to that wee have alredy spoken, these three rules: that is, that the Prince make himselfe well thought of by speaking soberly, that hee shewe his bounty, in forbearing from polling his subjects, and his wisdom in governing himselfe discretely. And that Prince which shall observe these rules, may justly say, that hee is the lively Image of God: as on the contrary, hee may assure himselfe, that if no mishap befall him in his life, hee shall feelee in his death this saying verified, That the mightie shalbe mightily tormented. Nowe let us come to subjectes, and their conversation with Princes, which (speaking of Princes in generall) I have alwayes thought that subjectes ought to avoide so much as they may, for that the good will of Princes kindleth upon a heate, and upon a soden, but it is by and by blowne forth againe with the winde of envy, or slaunder, which is proved by the example of Lysimachus and Scianus, who were so farre in favour, the one with Alexander, the other with Tiberius: who neverthesse fell from their high favour, into most foule disgrace and destruction. Yea, and without fetching so farre, wee see at this day many of the like chaunces. And though there bee nowe and then some one which mainteineth himselfe still in credite, and yet the poore soule alwayes liveth with an unquiet mind, and his maister doth continually loade him like a good horse, with some burden or other, and never leaveth untill hee have quite tyred him, so that hee findeth that saying true, That whether thy Prince love thee, or hate thee, it is all one evill. Whereupon

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

I thinke not amisse to followe the fable of the earthen vessell, whiche in no wise woulde have the company of the brasen vessell. And you know wel, that in their companie a man cannot utter his minde freely nor doe any thing contrarie to their pleasure: if hee doe, hee shalbe no friende of Cæsars.

GUAZ. The conversation of Princes in my judgement is not to bee avoided, in any other respect, but for that it taketh away that libertie, which is so acceptable in company, and bringeth us into a certaine kinde of bondage, which we cannot like of long, but wee must consider on the other side, howe much the being in the Princes companie doeth countenance us, howe thereby wee take away occasion for men to thinke that through basenesse of minde, wee abandon the Courte: what honour and profite wee often reape thereby, and what contentation and pleasure it is to us to be admitted into our Princes presence, yea, to be in the company and sight of such a Saint, as you spake of erewhile, I think most heavenly happinesse.

ANNIB. You have prevented me right: for I meant to adde, that though this conversation be daungerous, and that I myself especially never sought to enter into it, yet being well used, bringeth estimation and profite. Besides, that the Prince excelling us so much in vertue and valour, by how much hee is above us in degree, it is also to be thought, that his company availeth greatly to our edification in vertue and goodnes. Like as the example of the Prince you but now mentioned, hath made such vertuous, learned, and accomplished Courtiers, that there is not a more flourishing or famous Court in the worlde. But you are not ignorant, that some, not unlike the earthen vessels, are broken by leading their life with Princes, because they doe not behave themselves as behooveth them. And therefore, for their welfare and securitie, I briefly prescribe unto them, that they be not puffed up with pride and vaine glory, nor beare them never the bolder for the favour and good countenance of the Prince: but rather, the more they are exalted, to shew the more humilitie and reverence.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. I like that wel, for I have noted, that the Duke my maister hath withdrawne his favour from some, who have abused his goodnes towards them, whereby their fall was so much the greater, by how much before they were placed higher. And truely I know by prooffe, that he which will long enjoy the favour of his Prince, must like the Beare, in faire wether, be sad to think of the foule that is to come : whiche doubtfull thought, will keepe him in such humilitie and lowlynesse as Princes like of.

ANNIB. A Man cannot possibly behave himsefe to reverently towards them. And though it be reported, that when Aristippus could not be heard of Dionisius, he threw himself down at his feet, saying, the fault is not mine, that I commit this idolatrie, but the kings, who hath his eares in his feete : yet perhaps it might have been replied to Aristippus, that the fault was his, for that without using due reverence, he woulde be cheek mate with the Prince. But let us end this matter, charging every one what soever hee bee, to reverence and obey his Prince with all humilitie, for that the honour is not given to him, but to God him selfe, whose minister hee is. And what is saide of Princes, is to bee understoode also of Magistrates, not regarding that there are amongst them, whiche are unjust, cruell, partiall, ignorant, corrupt, respectours of persons etc., but having respect to this, that they are the members of the Prince.

GUAZ. Yet I woulde gladly have you discend to some particuler point belonging to Magistrates : to whom I think ther are necessarily some several rules to be prescribed, different from those you set downe to Princes, and so muche the rather, for that some of them touching their dealinges may bee amended.

ANNIB. The hurt certainly is inestimable, that commeth by an yll Magistrate, and therefore it is saide, That a Swoorde is put into a mad mans hand, when an office is bestowed upon a naughty person, who is commonly called an Ape in purple. Wherupon we are to advertise Magistrates, that as touching their calling, they be charitable in

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

correcting, upright in judging, and mercifull in punishing. And I would have those which begin to growe proude by reason of their preferment, to remember the example of that Asse, whiche bearing the image of the Goddesses Isis on his backe, and seeing that every one whiche met him, kneeled downe, and did adoration unto him, entred into great pride, and perswaded himselfe, that that honour was doone to him. Into the selfe same errour, some Magistrates fall, who seeing themselves saluted and honoured of every man, imagine that themselves deserve that honour: Not perceiving that for the most part, that honour is not done in respect of any desert of theirs, but in reverence of the Prince, whose image they beare in their head. Nay rather Magistrates in steede of being honoured rightly, and for their owne sakes, very often receive (as the Proverbe is) winde in a net: and taste meate seasoned rather with smoke then with salt.

GUAR. They may well say with our Lord, The people honoureth me with their lippes, but their hearte is farre from mee.

ANNIB. It is the saying of a wise man, That hee that sitteth worthily in the seate, doeth honour to the seate: but he that sitteth unworthily, shameth it. And therefore a discrete Magistrate ought not to take upon him bigly, or to alter his manners in respect of his dignitie, which hee shall not bee sure alwaies to enjoy: but so to use the matter, that hee may bee respected and honoured, not in respect of his office, but of the good partes which are in himselfe, to the ende that when hee shalbe out of office, hee may say that hee remaineth in honour, without the honour. And touching his conversation with the Prince, this is enough for him, that neither for feare nor hope, hee consent at any time to any thing that is unjust: neither to fulfill his perverse humour any way. But if it bee a greivous fault to consent to the disordinate desires of the Prince, it is much worse to put naughtie matters into his head, when hee before thought not of them, and to stirre him up to wrath, to cruelty, to vengeance, to extortion, and such like.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. Yea, but by your leave, those are the officers which continue longest in favour.

ANNIB. Yea, but where the Prince is wise and vertuous, you shall most commonly see such fellows leave their hyre, yea and their hide too behinde them, and ende their dayes most miserably and shamefully. The last advertisement to bee given to officers in respect of private persons is, that hee shewe himselfe in countenance severe and terrible, which maketh the guiltie afearde, and the guiltlesse bolde, which commonly pleaseth the good, and displeaseth the yll, and that hee bee patient to heare every man, but especially the poore, neither that hee be lesse liberall of justice, or quicke in dispatche towards them, then towards the riche and mightie. But alas, covetousnesse and ambition beare such sway, that in the judgement place, the offence of the riche is sooner defended, then the innocencie of the poore: and pardoning the crowes, pigeons are punished. But for that the time passeth away, let us passe to speake of the conversation between the learned, and the ignorant.*

GUAZ. I thinke it a matter impossible, for you to tune this later sort in suche sort, that they may bee acceptable in company to the other sort.

ANNIB. Whereupon grounde you that opinion?

GUAZ. Upon the example of water and waxe, which by no meanes may bee incorporated together: I meane, uppon the too great diversitie of their nature and disposition. You see, that the learned are seldome or never in the company of the unlearned: knowing wel that men make no account of that which they knowe not. And thereof arose the fable of the Cock finding a precious stone, which he set lesse by then a barly corne.

ANNIB. It is an ordinary saying, that ignorance is a kinde of folly. And therefore I woulde have you consider with mee, that there are in the worlde two sortes of the ignorant: the one foolishe, the other wise. I call foolishe ignorant, those who are not onely rude of understanding, and voide of learning, but also have in hatred and disdaine

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

all those who are wise and learned : and like naturall fooles judge all those to bee fooles, and scoffe at them, whiche make profession of learning : counting themselves happy in that they knowe nothing, and alwayes persevering in that errour. By reason whereof, those who are learned, have reason to flye their companie. For to reason of learning amongst such maner of people, is according to the Proverbe, To sow pearles amongst Swine. And there-upon as one of the sots saide, hee had rather continue amongst harlots then Philosophers : Pithagoras answered, that swine likewise love rather to lie in the durt and mudde, then in the cleare water. There are then an other sort of the ignorant, who are of good understanding, and though they have not the knowledge of letters, yet they acknowledge their ignorance, and being desirous to learne, love, honour, and followe, for the most parte those which are learned, neither can by any meanes away with the other sort of the ignorant : so that notwithstanding their lacke of knowledge, they merite rather the name of learned, then ignorant.

GUAZ. You should doe over great wrong to the learned, to bestow the title due to them, upon the unlearned.

ANNIB. I might well answer you to that, with that common rule that wee are alwayes taken for suche as those are, with whom we are conversant : but to satisfie you more fully, I say that betweene learning and ignorance, there is a certaine middle, whiche consisteth in a good opinion, that is, in being partaker of the trueth, without being able to yelde any reason why it is so : the which cannot be called learning, because learning can give a reason of thinges : and it cannot also be called ignorance, because he ought not to be tearmed ignorante, who is partaker of the trueth. And therefore betweene the learned, and the unlearned, are these wee speake of : who are not in deede learned, for that they have not the grounde of learning : neither are they ignorant, for that they strive to avoide ignorance, and to followe the learning of others. And forsomuch as I saide unto you, that they deserve the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

name rather of learned then ignorant, for prooffe of my wordes, I make good, that the principall part of vertue, is to flie vice. Yea I will say that a man rather ought to abstaine from naughtinesse, then to labour to attaine to goodnesse, prudence, and other vertues. And according to that, not onely Philosophers, who have the perfect knowledge and understanding of thinges partaining to the felicitie of life, may bee called vertuous, but all those also, whiche abstaining from vice, have a purpose to live and doe vertuously. For it is a common saying, That no man lacketh vertue, but he that careth not to have it : For the wil is the worker and foundation of vertue. And to make it short, hee ought to bee called ignorant, whose minde is repugnant to knowledge, or to the common opinion of others, or to reason : which most commonly wee may see prevaiileth. And contrariwise, hee is to bee tearmed wise, whose minde yeeldeth to learning, opinions, and reason, though hee bee not learned.

GUAZ. You will by these reasons make the ignorant waxe marvellous insolent : and you will bee the cause that they will bee called learned, without learning.

ANNIB. Wee wil set downe remedies foorth with to repress this arrogancie, and to keepe those Vapours from fuming into the head. But notwithstanding, wee cannot denie but that there are many men in the world, who without learning, following (like schollers) only nature as their mistresse, have wonne much praise and honour : and on the contrary, many learned men of simple judgement, live obscurely, without profiting themselves or others. And this is daily seene, that in company many learned men are cleane out of countenance, and shewe in their talke and behaviour neither wittinesse, nor pleasantnesse, whereas many that are altogether unlearned, are well liked of, eyther for some pleasant vaine that they have, or for some good jestures they use, or for some redinesse of witte, whiche they are naturally indued withall. So that the learned must not glory too much in their knowledge, but remember that the Eagle carrieth away the prise with his force, the Peacocke with

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

his feathers, the Nightingale with his Melody, and that nature shoulde have dealt injuriously with others, if shee had bestowed all her graces and perfections uppon one only: Mary, I will not for all that take away from the learned the honour which is due unto them, but I thinke it meete to confesse, that the learned are as the staffe and stay to the weake and feeble: and that of all the things whiche wee possesse in this world, only learning is perpetuall and immortall, and therefore I take great pitie of those who have not the good hap to have it. And it may very truely bee saide, that it is not so muche commendation to a man to bee learned, as it is shame to bee unlearned. Learning no doubt taketh from a man ignorance, learning directeth him in the course of his life, learning maketh him acceptable to all men, learning is an ornament to him in prosperitie, and a comforte in adversitie: finally, learning sifting him from the dregges and filth of the common people, serveth him as a ladder to climbe to honours and dignities, and raiseth him from earthly vanities, to the contemplation of thinges Celestiall and divine.

GUAZ. You attribute so much to the honour of learning, that you seeme to forget the commendation due to armes: whiche (as you knowe) is able to weigh with it, in any grounde in Italy.

ANNIB. I am not ignorant, that a personage of account being asked whether hee had rather bee Achilles or Homer, made answer, Tell mee thou thy selfe, whether thou hadst rather bee a Trumpetter, or a Captaine? But though this answer make for armes, yet I pray you tell mee what you thinke to bee the end and marke that wise and worthe men shoote at?

GUAZ. I thinke it bee to leave behinde them that, which may triumphe over death, and according to the saying of the Poet,

May fetch a man foorth of his grave,
and keepe him still alive.

ANNIB. You say well: but whereof dependeth this immortallitie and everliving name?

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. Of learning, and histories, whereby it is conserved for ever.

ANNIB. You may see then, that learning is above armes, for that learning of it selfe is able to purchase immortalitie : but armes cannot doe it without the aide of learning : which Alexander the great knew well enough, who calling Achilles happie, for that it was his hap to have so excellent a setter foorth of his doings, woulde say no more, but that hee desired likewise to light upon one, who with the like grace, woulde gather into one booke, his travelles, conquests, and renowned Acts : which without some suche excellent wit, to commend them to posteritie, he knew would soone be buried in oblivion.

GUAZ. I thinke verily, that without some spurre of everlasting praise, fewe men would bee pricked forward to enterprise any thing worthie praise.

ANNIB. Wee all covet this glory, as the fruite and lawfull reward of our travell : and there is no man but is right glad to consecrate his name to immortalitie. For prooffe wherof it is tolde that a certaine writer published in print a little pamphlet of his owne making, intituled, The contempt of glory, wherein by many notable reasons, hee indeavoured to proove that it is a vanitie unseemely for a man to gape after glory, in consideration of his owne works. But that writer was afterwarde charged to have committed the same fault, which hee found fault with in others, for that hee had set his name in the first page and beginning of his booke. Whereby it was apparantly knowne, that if hee had contemned glory in deede, as he went about to perswade others by wordes, he would have caused his book to have been imprinted without his name, whiche being blazed in the fore front as it was, gave a manifest signe, how desirous he was of glory : but Cicero would never dissemble in that point, who in a long letter, openly and earnestly requested Luceius to gratifie him in three thinges : The first, that he would set downe separately from his other histories, the conspiracy of Cateline, therby to give immortal fame to his name : the second, that he woulde add some

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

thing in respect of the frendship which was betwene them. The third, that he would publish his book with al speed possible, that while he were yet living, he might taste of the sweetenesse of his owne glory. I will not heere let passe Augustus, who joyned to his last will and Testament his owne acts peece by peece, appointing that they shoulde bee ingraven upon his tombe in pillers of brasse. But how many other may a man rehearse, who went canvassing about, and craving for this brute, and this glory, by the meane either of histories, or of images, or of tombes, or of pictures, or of buildinges, or other memorials.

GUAZ. It seemeth a greater marvell to mee, that so honourable a desire should enter into the heart of a common Courtisan, named Trine, who being very rich, suche time as Alexander the great razed the walles of Thebes, went and profered the Thebanes to repaire them at her owne charges, so that they would bee content that, to her everlasting fame, shee might cause only these wordes to bee ingraven in the wall: Alexander razed it, and Trine raised it.

ANNIB. This woman was better to bee borne withal, who sought glory with her owne money, then some are, who get it at other mens cost, and being not able to leave behinde them a good report by help of their owne vertue, attribute theevishly to themselves the doings of strangers, of which sorte of men, it is not long since that wee used some speeche. Touching armes, I reply that the deedes of famous Captaines and worthie souldiers die with them, if they have not some to set them foorth in writing, or unlesse they have joyned to their prowesse in armes, the knowledge of good letters. So that by the example of Cæsar, they may be able to hold the speare in the rest with one hand, and with the other the pen to write their own acts, which were very necessary, especially in these our dayes, wherein the memory of divers worthy souldiers, yea, Princes and Gentlemen, who have atchieved many valiant exploites, hath been lost, and is yet from time to time lost. Whereas if they had been so wel set foorth as the famous men were in time past, they

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

should never have had cause to have envied the glory of Annibal, Marcellus, Cæsar, or the Scipios, but had been equal to them in every respect.

GUAZ. Heereby may be gathered how profitable the conversation of the learned men is, and how important it is to have the friendship and familiaritie of writers : who with one drop or two of ynke, may prolong our life through many ages.

ANNIB. They have power not only to prolong life, but to abridge it. And thereupon a certain Captaine used to say, that the pennes of writers, pearce the souldiers corslets. We know wel how divers writers either to please others, either led by affection, or moved upon some other occasion, have in their histories, contrary to their duety, magnified and exalted above the trueth, the doings of some captaines, and abased or els concealed the notable enterprises of other some, and by the force of their hand and penne, have lift up the litle, and thrust downe the great.

GUAZ. Touching that, I remember that P. Jovius being blamed for the infidelitie of his historie, he could not deny it, saying yet that he comforted himselfe, knowing that when a hundred yeres were once expired, there would be no man living that could gainsay his writing, for that the posteritie shold be driven of necessitie to give undoubted credite unto them.

ANNIB. Perchaunce he would not have put himselfe in that hazard, if hee had not made his account by the majestie and elegancie of his history, to make al the writers of this time afeard to write against him. * But as the world goeth, those shew themselves wise men, whiche keepe the learned their friends, and which receive them into their favour and protection : not so much for their owne behoofe, as for the love of vertue, which thing brought great glory to Alexander, to Augustus, and to Mecenas, who bestowed honours and marvellous rewards upon divers Gramarians, Orators, Poets, and philosophers. Neither thinke I meet to let passe the example of Pius the seconde, who in the warres of his time gave expresse commandement that the honor, goods, and life of the people of Arpines should be spared, in the

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

remembraunce of Tully, who was that countrie man, and for that there were many there living, which bore his name.* But it is good to set downe some forme of conversation to the learned, and to put them in remembrance in the first place, that learning maketh a man glorious and haughtie, * which is confirmed by Accius the Poet, who tooke so bigly upon him, by reason of his learning, that Cæsar the Emperour entring into the colledge of Poets, he would not vouchsafe to salute him, thinking himselfe better then him. I truely was ever of this minde, that as a tree, the more it is taken with fruit, the more it bendeth to the ground : so a man, the more hee is stored with learning, the more hee ought to humble himselfe. For that the ground of true vertue is humilitie : neither is any mans name so bright, but that by pride it is obscured.* And therefore the learned ought neither to hide their knowledge without fruite, neither to shew it upon vaine glory, but for their profite and preferment. They ought also to conforme their life to their learning, for that knowledge is no better in a naughtie man, then good wine put into a mustie vessell. They ought likewise to imploy their learning to the benefite of others, and to make others partakers of it. For that a man doeth not possesse pleasantly any good thing without companie, so that they ought to take paines to instruct others, in that they themselves are skilfull in : and they must begin to learne to teach.

GUAZ. I thinke it also convenient for the learned in conversation and company, to take heede of affectation, whereby they make themselves rather disliked then commended.

ANNIB. I meant even nowe to have told you, that that same is the error of some learned men, who being in the company of the unlearned, take delight to speake amongst them like a maister that readeth to his schollers, and as if they were in the midst of learned men and Philosophers, they make argumentes in moode and figure, and discourse with tearmes, which are onely understoode of the learned : and thereby they offend the eares, and turne the mindes of

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

the hearers from giving attention to their talke. A man ought then especially amongst the ignorant to use suche familiar kind of learning, and with such discretion, that it may serve rather for sauce to get them a stomach, then for meate to fil and cloy them, so that the unlearned may have in detestation their owne ignorance, and in admiration his knowledge.

GUAZ. Hee that shall knowe howe to keepe this way, which you have proposed, shall no doubt give and receive great contentment in the company of the ignorant, who without any difficultie will allowe of that he shall say, and have him in great honour for it.

ANNIB. One saide, that as some ships seeme great uppon the ryver, whiche shewe very little uppon the Sea : so some seeme learned amongst the ignorant, whiche have but a little when they come amongst the learned. And it can not bee denied, but that in all companies, hee ruffleth most, and taketh pleasure to utter that which is in him, who knoweth him selfe to bee chiefe and best seene in the matter whiche is spoken of. But for all that, hee must not perswade himselfe that hee ought not to heare the unlearned speake, or to make any reckoning of them : For that there are men to bee found, who though they be not indued with learning, yet they have a good wit of their owne, and are able to compasse their matters well enough, and bring them to a good ende : insomuch that many, who are learned, seeme but fooles in respect of them. Like as a scholler came to an artificer, to crave his devotion, saying, That hee was maister in the vij. Artes. But the Artificer answered him, I am more learned then thou art, for that with one Art only, I nourishe my selfe, my wife, and children, where as thou canst not keepe thy selfe alone with seven.

GUAZ. Now I pray you give the ignorant some instructions, whereby they may in conversation get the favour of the learned.

ANNIB. Wee have alredy, if you remember in the beginning of our discourse, injoynd unto them silence, as a most singuler thing, whiche neverthesse they keepe very

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

yll. For that in company, if you marke it, those whiche knowe least, speake, contend, and crie the lowdest. Whereof belike ariseth this Proverbe, That the brokenest wheele of the charriot maketh alwaies the greatest noyse.

GUAZ. A man might contrariwise apply another Proverbe to the learned, That where the ryver is deepest, it runneth quietest.

ANNIB. The second advise is, that being in the company of the learned, they remember that they are unlearned. For by that meanes they will bee wary what they speake : for it is the saying of a Philosopher, that hee never offendeth in those things hee knoweth not, who knoweth that he doeth not knowe them. And contrariwise hee is ignorant and doth amisse, who thinketh hee knoweth, that he doeth not know. Thirdly, they are to bee advertised, that amongst the degrees of superioritie before spoken of, this is one, that the wise commaund over the ignorant : whereas it is their part to be silent without standing obstinately in contention : for that there is nothing in this world more odious then an ignorant person, which will contend with the learned, like as the Pie did with the Nightingale in musicke. And therefore as it is the part of one that is learned, gently to impart to the ignorant that which he knoweth, so is it the part of the ignorant to ask, without hiding his ignorance, that which he knoweth not, and rather to confesse not to know, then to professe to know : for the one is a signe of modestie, the other of arrogancie.

GUAZ. It were not amisse, yet to use a little skil in confessing the want of skill, that it turn not to our open shame. But it were no great matter, if one did like a good gentleman of our countrie, whom a stranger asked what history it was that was painted about his hall : the Gentleman saide, stay heere I pray you a little, and I will returne to you by and by : that said, he went hastily to the study of a brother of his, who was a Doctour, and bringing him with him into the hall where the stranger was, he saide unto him, brother, I pray you make answeere unto this Gentleman.

ANNIB. But perhaps it wil be a hard matter to finde in

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

every house so much as one, who with his wisdom is able to supply others ignorance. But let us return to say that the ignorant ought to honour the learned, and to seeke their companie, which wil make them more politike, more wise, and more vertuous. For if you marke it, those whiche are unlearned, lightly give them selves too dishonest doings : for seeing that they cannot get the favour of the Prince nor any preferment any way, for lacke of learning and vertue, they indeavour to set up themselves, either by flatterie, either by promoting, either by slaundering, or by false accusing, and other naughtie meanes, whiche those that are learned, will never lightly use : but enough of this. And for that wee saide but erewhile, that the learned receiveth great contentment in the companie of the unlearned, let us nowe consider howe little that contentment is in respect of that whiche he receiveth being in the companie of his like : For no doubt a learned man taketh much more pleasure in the company of the learned, who know, yea, and allowe better of his learning, then in the company of the ignorant, who understande it not so well, neither are able to judge of it. Besides, when hee is amongst the ignorant, hee taketh pleasure only in that which hee himselfe giveth. But when hee is with the learned, he delighteth both in it, which hee giveth, and that hee receiveth : for that by turnes hee doeth both teach and learne. Moreover, hee hath another contentment, to know that where is greatest conformitie in estate, in life and in study, there is greatest agreement in good will and amitie, and consequently greater pleasure and contentment, * yea, that effect is bred among them, which is found amongst flowers, which being separated one from another give a good smell, but being bounde together in a posie, they recreate the spirites a great deale more, like as it was well saide by a Poet,

Two good men joyned together, doe
in goodnesse more excel :
And roses joyned with lilies have
a greate deale sweeter smell.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

Yea, it is a Philosophers saying, that one in comparison of two is no bodie.* And truely amongst all other companies, and societies, there is not any more firmly and neerely linked together, then this of the learned : who for the most part love better amongst themselves, then kinsfolke and brethren doe : agreeing in like studies, and like affections, they can not but take pleasure one in another, and reduce them selves from the number of many as it were into one united body.

GUAZ. All other assemblies may be well termed strange and externall, and this same familiar and internal, wherein the mindes are exercised in reasoning, teaching, and discoursing of things, which appertaine to the knowledge of vertue and goodnesse. And these are the true freendships, which last long.

ANNIB. It is a common saying, that the bondes of vertue binde more straightly, then the bondes of blood. And in trueth one good man may be sayd to be a neere kinsman to another good man, by the conformitie of their minds and manners.*

GUAZ. Heereby I imagine how great the concorde, the pleasure, and the profit is, which is reaped by the Academie of the *illustratie* (as they tearme them) established in this citie.

ANNIB. You are deceived in your imagination, for this Academy being assembled in the name of God, you may well thinke, that he is in the midst of them, and that hee mainteineth it in peace and amitie. What comfort every one receiveth by it, I cannot sufficiently set foorth unto you : for that I have tried in my selfe and seene plainly in other Academikes, that there is not any one so afflicted with the common miseries of this citie, and with his private troubles, who setting once his foote into the hal of the Academie, seemeth not to arive at the haven of tranquillitie, and beginneth not to cleere his minde of care : casting his eyes about the hall to see those goodly devises, full of profounde mysteries. I may well say of my selfe, that when my bodie is shut within it, all my yrkesome thoughtes are

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

shut out : the which attend me at the doore, and at my going out get uppon my shoulders, but touching the good which commeth of his happie assembly, you may be assured in thinking to your selfe what diversitie of learning is there handled, sometimes with publike lectures, sometimes with private reasonings, which breede that delight, which cometh of giving and receiving, as we have sayde before. And I may say without arrogancie, that the Academie, borrowing me as it were to reade in Philosophie, hath payed mee home with interrest, beeing not onely bettered in that parte, but also indued with some knowledge in divinitie, poetrie, and other laudable sciences, whereof I knowe I am not altogether voide.

GUAZ. I have noted by long experience, that for the most parte those are smallly accounted of, in companie, which have bestowed al their studie in one onely profession. For drawing them once out of that, you shall finde them very sottes and fooles. Whereas on the contrary, those are very well thought of, who besides their chiefe profession are able to discourse reasonable well and with discretion of other matters : In so much that the knowledge they shew in those bye matters, bringeth them so much the more honour, by how much they are estraunged from their ordinary profession. Wherefore seeing in companie wee commonly devise of diverse thinges, leaping from one matter into another, there is nothing, in my judgement, that doeth us more honour, or maketh us better liked of, in good companie, then to be readie at all assayes, and have a mouth for every matter : to be able to perfourme which, I consider that the companie of many learned men is very availeable, like as that of the Academies is.

ANNIB. We have alredie sayde that it is not in one man to speake sufficiently of all thinges, by reason of the shortnesse of his lyfe, but for so much as all learning is not in one alone, it is good that manie assemble together to make amongst them one perfect man, as it falleth out in those learned companies.

GUAZ. Seeing the conversation of these Academikes is
1 : FF

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

so avayleable, I looke you shoulde set downe some orders for them, which they ought to observe, to mainteine themselves long in agreement and amitie.

ANNIB. I should thinke I should commit a fault if I should speake any thing of that, for that it were according too the Proverb to instruct Minerva: knowing that it is in them rather to teach, then to be taught the orders of conversation. Besides that, they have lawes and orders set downe in writing, by force whereof, friendship and concord is inviolably kept amongst them.

GUAZ. I pray you yet at the least, to tell and recount unto me the order of the Academie of the *illustrati* in this citie, and to declare unto me the originall of it, and what is the manner of their conversation together.

ANNIB. If I should thoroughly satisfie your request, this day would not be enough to doe it, but to content you somewhat, I briefly say unto you that these Academikes desirous to travayle continually for their owne glorie, and the universall benefite, have proposed unto themselves the enterprise of the sunne, which going out of the Horizon, ascendeth to the opposite of the moone, which setteth in the West, and upon this devise, are set these wordes, *Lux indeficiens*, with the name of *Illustrati*. The lawes of the Academie are a great manie, but they are referred al, chiefly to the honour of God, and conservation of the state of the Academie. In proposing of matters, in discoursing and in answering, they proceede with great respect and reverence, without tumult, without confusion. And in giving of voyces every one preferreth his auncient before him. As touching private congregations, some are called for the creation of the Prince, Counsellours, Censors, and other Officers, who are made by secrete voyces, and they continue but from foure monethes to foure: some to heare the discourse of some Academike, who loveth not to doe it publicly: some to admit the newe Academikes that were before chosen by privie voyces: and to heare their speeches, wherein they render thanks too the Prince and the Academikes. Some to conferre of those thinges which are to be handled in

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

publike : and then there are ordinarily made lectures and discourses of divers matters, and by two Academikes the compositions and workes of the Academie are redde, and afterwarde the writings and doynges of strangers. Every two monethes they change their Prince, and in that ceremonie, the olde Prince geveth up his throne and delivereth the seale of the Academie too his successour, who placing himselfe in the others seate, taketh possession of the principallitie : which is done in everie point with such state and majestie, that I am not able to expresse it. Which you may imagine by the great multitude, not onely of Citizens, but of straungers, which are present at it. Moreover, it happeneth sometime, that some Academike is married, and then the bride and other gentlewomen with her, are invited to this assemblie : where shee is honoured with great pompe and solemnity, with pleasant discourses, with commendatorie verses, with musicke and such like. Like as my Ladie Francis your cosin was, to whom in open assembly there was geven in the name of the Academikes a Carcanet of golde, which you may perhaps have seene about her necke, whereon the one side, is bravely set foorth, the devise or armes of the Academie : and on the other side, the devise of your brother : but something altered, for whereas that hath a flying swan, with a branche of bay in her mouth, and this writing on it (above the skies) this hath besides the shadow of the same swan, and the posie is changed, which is (Be a mate in this maner) meaning that shee ought to follow the steps of her husband, as the shadowe did the swanne. They use also at the death of any of the Academikes to make funerall assemblies, in honour of him with such gravitie and sadnesse that it is wonderfull. I coulde rehearse unto you many other notable thinges, but I will omit them for the time is short, which we have to bestowe in other matters, wee will onely say then, that the conversation with the learned standeth us in marvellous steede, delighteth us muche, and is the cause of greate love and amity. Which is shewed by the fable of Narcissus, who being without company, so soone as hee sawe himselfe

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

in a fountaine, fel in love with himself : and therfore nothing being more like unto us, then our Image, it may bee well sayde, that when one that is learned loveth an other that is learned, that both of them love nothing els, but their owne Image in an other. And it may be likewise saide, that this their friendship is perpetual, as well as the love of ones selfe is. Nowe let us come to the conversation betweene strangers and Citizens.

GUAZ. Seeing we have but a little time left, it were better to omitte this matter, as a thing little and seldome happening.

ANNIB. Let us at least shewe unto the Citizen, that it is his part to have a pittifull eye towardes straungers, and to consider, that being farre from their countrey, parentes and goodes, being deprived of all those commodities which wee enjoy in our owne houses, they are to bee succoured with all ayde and favour possible, and especially those, which are in necessitie : For no doubt, hee that receiveth them into his lodging, purchaseth to himself a lodgeing and abyding place in heaven, by meanes of his charitable curtesie : yea wee must knowe, that this worke is so acceptable to God, that he that giveth onely a cuppe of colde water to drinke, in the way of charitie, shall not goe without reward. And though the commodities heere belowe are not to bee compared with the heavenly rewardes, yet let us thinke what honour and profit the good enterテインement which wee give to straungers bringeth us : for that those which keepe open house for strangers, doe not onely winne credit in their owne countrey, but without setting foote out of the precinct of their owne terrytorie, they are known, and honourably reported of in forrain countries : besides that, they are sure, when they travayle, to finde friendes, money, and succour at neede.

GUAZ. It is a great contentment to a man, to see himself esteemed, and made much off by his parentes and friends, in his owne countrey : but that is but a trifle in respect of the good it doeth a man, when hee seeth himselfe entertained and honoured, where he is scarce knowen. And therfore

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

you shall easily perswade mee to performe this duetie towards strangers, towards whom I feele my selfe marvellously wel affected, for that in my travayle, I received at their handes great curtesie.

ANNIB. For that cause I was about to tell you, that those shew themselves most hoggish and cruell to strangers, who never went out of their countrie: Who for that they have not felt the inconveniences, and discommodities of travell, have no consideration of the state of strangers, neyther are moved with any compassion towards them. Wherein they are greatly too blame, for that they ought too shewe to strangers more curtesie and honour, then to their owne councitriemen. Being the saying of a Philosopher, that a stranger when he is deprived of his friendes and parentes, is to bee pitied both of God and men. And therefore beeing in companie with them, we ought to use great respect towards them, both in deede and word, forbearing finding of faultes, and other boldnesse, which we might lawfully use towards our owne countrie-men, yea, and to cloake and to beare rather with their imperfections. So that some are of this opinion, that we ought not to deale yll with strangers, though they deserve it.

GUAZ. It is very true, but yet oftentimes straungers are worse used, then they should be by theyr owne fault, when they will be of housholde with us in a manner, and be more familiar and bolde, then they ought to be, which maketh them fare the woorse.

ANNIB. And therefore it shalbe the part of a straunger, being in another mans house, not to take upon him presumptuously, but to behave himselfe so modestly, that every man may love and favour him. For as if he set himselfe forward too much, hee shalbee pulled backe with shame: so if hee hang backe, hee shalbe halled forward with honour. He must also in companie use the same behaviour in worde and deede towards you, as you are bound to doe towards him: wherby your conversation may be acceptable on both sides. It remaineth to

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

speake of the Conversation betweene the seculer and the religious.

GUAZ. You may have soone done if you will, seeing that nowe a dayes this Conversation happeneth but one day in the yeere, and of that day but one halfe houre only, which is spent in confessing our sinnes : which done, we not only flie the Conversation, but the verie presence of our ghostly father.

ANNIB. To whom impute you the fault of this sildome conversation, to the religious, or to the lay people ?

GUAZ. It can not be ascribed to the religious (for they seek both us and ours) but to us, who flie from them.

ANNIB. And why thinke you, we flie from them ?

GUAZ. The Devill belike persuadeth us not to come at them, nor to have them in any reverence or honour, because some of them are sprinckled with some imperfections.

ANNIB. It was demanded of a Pope, whether it were lawefull for Priestes nowe a dayes to minister the Sacrament in wooden Chalices, as they did in times past : who answered nothing else, but that in olde time golden Priestes ministered in wooden Chalices, and nowe wooden Priestes minister in golden Chalices. To like effect is this saying, That there is in the worlde scarcitie of Priestes, and plentie of Priestes, that is, too many in the bare name, too fewe that rightly execute the office. But it ought to suffice us to knowe, that they have the name and the true calling of Ministers, and that God hath given them unto us, not that wee should be judges of their dooinges, but folowers of their doctrine. And those which like not their company, no doubt offend greatly, and suffer to enter into their mindes the wicked spirite, enemy to religion, and the Christian fayth. But true Christians can not denie, but that the company of the religious is greatly available : For that by their doctrine they keepe us in the right way, and by their outwarde gravitie only they give us an example to doe well. I for my parte, never yet met with any of the Ministry carrying so evill a report, or leading so lewde a life, but that by his company, I was rather stirred then stayed from

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

wel doing : And I have alwayes been of this minde, that nothing but good can happen unto him whiche frequenteth their company. Wee must then leave it to God to judge of their life, and being amongst them, wee ought to forbear all lewde speeches and behaviour, whereby their godly eares may bee offended, and God him selfe dishonoured, and to have them in continuall reverence and honour :

* For so muche as they are the messengers of God, and bring the glad tydings of the Gospell unto us. Yea, and are termed in holie scripture the sault of the earth, the light of the worlde, a Candle uppon a Candlesticke, giving light to all whiche are in the house of God, a picked seede, a holie nation, and finally, Starres and Angelles. So that all the honour and reverence wee doe to them, wee may assure our selves is done to God him selfe.* You are not ignoraunt on the other side, that the duetie of the Clergie is, in conversing with the laytie, to beware howe they so muche as speake any thing tending to evill example, or giving suspition of an yll disposed minde. Remembring the saying, That the vaine wordes of temporall men, are meere blasphemies in the mouth of spirituall men. * And before they goe about to infourme other in godlinesse, they must refourme them selves from naughtinesse: For it is in vaine to goe about to make the shadowe strait, if the bodie whiche giveth the shadowe bee crooked. They must also in teaching and reprehending, bee neither too sharpe nor too gentle, but tempered betweene the rodde and the staffe : with the one to strike us, with the other to stay us.* They ought also by their good life and doctrine to amend our naughtie lives, and to stir us up to reverence them, by shewing them selves more devout, more just, more faultlesse, then us, for there is nothing that doth more dishonor the church of God, then that Lay men are for the most part of better life and conversation, then spiritual men are.

GUAZ. If I remember the division which you made of the kinds of Conversation, there remayneth no more for us to speake of, but the conversation with women.

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. It was very meete this discourse should bee reserved to the end, to refreshe us beeing weery with the long journey we have gone this day.

GUAZ. I doubt me, that devising of this conversation in steede of refreshment, wee shall feele greater travell and torment, or els I must say, that your taste differeth much from mine, for that I have alwayes thought the conversation of women, not onely vayne and unprofitable, but daungerous and hurtfull: and if you feele anye spirite in you, repugnaunt too this my opinion, conjure it, and drive it out of you by the vertue of three notable sentences: The first is, that if the worlde coulde bee mayntained without women, wee shoulde live like God himselfe. The seconde, that there is nothing in the worlde woorse than a woman, bee shee never so good. The thirde, that the naughtinesse of a man is better than the goodnesse of a woman.

ANNIB. These three sentences serve rather to keepe in, than to cast out the spirite which is within mee: and I see well you respect nothing, but the outwarde barke. But if the sharpnesse of your understanding will pearce into the pith, you shall finde that those speeches have not beene used in reproche of women, but in reproofe of mens incontincencie, and frailtie. Who offende sooner in frequenting honest women, then noghtie men? For that haunting the companie of Userers, theeves, adulterers, slaunderers, and suche like, of evill Conversation, they will not suffer themselves so soone to be tempted and taken by theyr naughtinesse, as in accompanying with women. For though they be never so chaste and honest, yet men will bee moved with a lascivious and disordinate desire towards them: whiche is verified by that which is saide, Thou canst neither bee more learned then David, neither more strong then Sampson, neither more wise then Solomon, who notwithstanding have falne by meanes of women. Beholde the very juice and true meaning of the sentences by you alleaged, the whiche I wil say once more, are more meete to keepe in my spirite, then to cast him out. For if it bee so that vertue consist in thinges difficulte and uneasie, I thinke to doe a vertuous acte to

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

conjure my senses to bee quiet, and not to bee mooved any thing with the presence and company of women : amongst whom I have gotten the habite to live in this my tranquillitie of minde.

GUAZ. Your Philosophie perchaunce hath so mortified you, that you can promise your selfe the constancie of that Philosopher whom a woman tooke for an image. But I must tel you, that vertue is given to fewe, and it is knowne that not only the common sort of men, but even Hermites them selves have letten their Portis fall out of their handes at the sight of women.

ANNIB. If I bee not of the order of that Philosopher, neither am I of the disorder and lightnesse of those who are in love with every one they looke on, and have so litle hold of them selves, that they will bee lost in the lookes of a woman, and are no more to bee seene in them selves. Yea, their folly is so great, that if a woman shewe but a merry countenance, make some signe by chaunce, or use any other jesture, they apply it all to themselves, as done in their favour, and filled with a thousande vaine pleasures, and oftentimes make court to suche a one, whose minde is farre of both from them, and their purpose.

GUAZ. And this is also a fault of women, who are commonly saide to be like death, for that they followe those who flie them, and flie those which seeke them.

ANNIB. Honest women flie in deede those which follow them dishonestly. Yea, and the dishonest flie too, though they suffer themselves soone to be overtaken. But you shall never finde woman so shamelesse, but that shee thinketh it a fault to followe others, and will be first sued to her selfe. So that the fault is not as you say in the woman, but in the man. But you seeme to be a verie rebell against women.

GUAZ. I am no rebell unto them, for that I never promised or swore faith or fealtie unto them. But howe can a man love them that are called women, of the woe and hurt they bring to men ?

ANNIBALL. And why not of the woe and hurt they derive

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

from men, which is confirmed by God him selfe, who saith, he made them for a helpe and comfort to man.

GUAZ. What, to helpe to consume a man as the Poet saide ?

Lesbia doeth sucke the purse and bodie drie,
to buy love so deere is most extreeme follie.

ANNIB. That is not the Conversation that wee are to speake of, and it seemed verie straunge to mee, that you beeing a Courtier shoulde professe your selfe suche an enemy to women.

GUAZ. Pardon mee I pray you, I mistooke you then, for so soone as you began to speake of the Conversation of women : I thought you had ment of those with whom men trie their manhood withall in amorous incounters. For I thinke that those which make profession of the life, ought to learne the meanes howe to trafike together in suche sort, that they may live long time together in love and liking. And touching women of honestie and reputation, you know well that it is my part not only to reverence them, but to maintaine and defende their honour and good name, both with word and with sword. Yea, though dutie did not constraine me to do it, yet affection should cary me to it, having been alwayes most desirous of their favour.

ANNIB. We can not (saving our honour) speake of the Conversation which you meane : and in my fancy it is our partes rather to overthrow it, then to build it up, as a thing unworthy of the civil Conversation. And to the ende you remaine no longer in suspence, I woulde have you with mee thinke this, that the nature of man is inclined to nothing more then to the love of women. But that we may not bee deceived, we must know, that there is one Venus in heaven, and another in earth : the latter is the mother of wanton love, the other, of honest affection. Wanton love is nothing els but a passion, which blindeth the understanding, perverteth the minde, confoundeth the memory, wasteth the goods, weakeneth the body, withereth youth, killeth age, which is the breeder of vices, an inhabiter in

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

idle and empty heads, which is a thing without reason, without order, and without any stay, a fault proper to fooles, and which is the abridger of mans libertie.

GUAZ. It appeareth you are well acquainted with our Boccace, seeing you remember so well his sayings, wheretoo may be added that of the Poet,

I see the thing I doe, the trueth which to my cost

I know, no whit doth me deceive, yet love so rules the rost :
That who so foloweth it, no vertue folow shall,

for unto lewdnesse and to vice, it doeth him daily call.

ANNIB. For conclusion, so soone as this love hath taken roote in the heart, in the same instant are lost goods, honestie, renoume, vertue, yea body and soule. And therefore al those who are folowers of this fond brutish love, are to be admitted only into the company of incontinent and naughtie women. For they are not worthie the presence and entertainment of the honest and vertuous. Next foloweth the heavenly love, which being inamoured with the beauties of the minde, is the cause of much good, and of many commendable effectes. For it maketh men affable, discrete, curteous, painfull, patient, valiant, and as a brave writer hath alredie saide, It taketh from men all rude and clownishe behaviour, it maketh them familiar in companye, pleasaunte at the Table, amiable everye waye. It is the chiefe bringer in of mercy, and banisher of crueltie : it breedeth friendship, and driveth away hatred : it is it whiche maketh a man friendly, liberall, desirous to doe well, and loth to doe yll : it is a wise guide in our travayles, in our desires, and in our woordes : to conclude, it is the most perfect ornament of mans life. And truely, if you marke the order of feastes, playes, and merie meetinges of friendes, you will say, that all those assembles are colde and nothing delightfull, if there bee no women at them. For as men in their presence plucke up their spirites, and indeavour by woordes, jestures, and all other wayes to give them to understande howe desirous they are of their favour and good will, so you ought to thinke, the object beeing out of

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

their eyes, they will become carelesse, mannerlesse, and lesse readie to commendable enterprises. To bee shorte, women are they whiche keepe men waking and in continuall exercise : yea, I thinke there is no man so lazy and drouzy, but that he will open his eyes when hee heareth talke of women. And so soone as hee spyeth comming a farre of, her whom hee hath placed most neere to his heart, I warrant you he setteth his ruffes, hee turneth his Cappe and feather the right way, hee pulleth up his cloake about his shoulders, hee standeth a tiptoe, hee sheweth a joyfull and smyling countenaunce, and hee seemeth to be become a newe man, that hee may bee more acceptable to the sight of his mistress, in whose presence hee chaungeth colour, and looketh pale, by reason that his heart abandoneth his bodie to followe her, beeing drawne as it were by it owne image.

GUAZ. Women doe the verie same, who I warrant you woulde not be so fine, so trimmed and tricked up, so amiable every way, but of a desire to please men.

ANNIB. You see then that this love is no lesse mutuall then honest.

GUAZ. Yea, but if this love were so honest as you make it, you shoulde not see men shewe them selves more affectionate to the fayre then to the foule, to the yong then to the olde. But you see fewe take pleasure either in over-worne antiquities, or unseemely deformities. By reason wherof it is easie to be knowne, that they are in love rather with the bodie then the minde : and that their love is earthly, and fleshly, which you have alreadie banished out of good companie.

ANNIB. Women did the like for al the world towards men. For I knowe some of them which are very angrie in their mindes, when their chauce is to be led in a daunce, either by a childe or an old man : whereas on the contrarie they are very glad when they have gotten a young man by the hand.

GUAZ. In my opinion they have great reason in it, for that as a wise man saith, pleasures and favours are not to bee done either to a childe or to an olde man. For the one

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

forgetteth them, the other dyeth before he have occasion to requite them.

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

ANNIB. That is not the occasion which moveth them to doe so. And to avoide al confusion, wee must consider that love is a desire of beautie, and that beautie is of three sortes, to wit : of the minde, of the body, and of the speech. The first is discerned by the understanding, the second by the eyes, the third by the eares. And therefore it is saide that the three graces represent those three partes. So long then as love is guided only by the eyes, the eares, and the minde, it is without question, honest, and wise lovers ought to content themselves only with the fruition of those fruites, without thinking or seeking any farther. And contrariwise, it cannot bee counted honest, or deserve the name of love, but of lust and folly, when they are moved to it by any other of their senses. Nowe wee are heere to consider, that naturally our mindes are most drawen thither, where beautie doth most abound : and therefore no meruaile if men for the most parte addresse themselves more willingly towards the faire and yong, then the foule and olde : for that in the faire and young commonly those three sortes of beautie concur, of the minde, of the body, and of the speech. Whereas in the foule and the olde the beauty of the body is wanting, which in the foule fayleth by nature, and in the old by length of tyme. The same reason may serve to shewe why women in banquets and dauncing make more account of young men then of children or olde men, for that in children there is no other beautie to bee seene but that of the body : for the two other are wanting. I meane of the speeche whiche consisteth in pleasant devise, and fine filed talke, and of the minde whiche is shewed in discreete behaviour and vertuous deedes, which cannot be ripe and perfect in them. In old men is to be found only the beauty of the mind and of the speeche, for that they have not that of the body, which is worne away with time. But all the three beauties meete together for the most part in yong men. And though this inclination bee common to men and women, yet you see some men fall in

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE SECOND BOOKE

love sooner with an olde woman then with a yong, and with a foule then with a faire: which happeneth likewise to some women, whiche beare fervent affection to some men who are altogether bereeved of the beautie of the body, and in a manner deformed, but happily indued with vertue, pleasantly conceited, and valiantly given. A man can not terme this folly or lacke of judgement. For it must bee saide that a woman casting her fancy to a man of unseemely personage, doth naturally make smal account of that outwarde beautie, and is induced to love him in respect of the other beauties of speech, and of the mind: and that a man doeth the like towards a woman. Neither ought wee to thinke it straunge that some lovers, the older they waxe the more fervently they love one another: but we ought to judge their love the more perfect. For touching the woman the more she groweth in yeres, the more ripenesse the beauty of her mind groweth to, and the older the man waxeth, the better he is able to discerne the beauties of his mistresse, whereby his love the more increaseth. But for that my chiefe purpose is not to discourse of love, but of the conversation with women, it shall suffice us to knowe, that there is no man in the worlde so blockishe, or suche a Cimon, who beeing in love, calleth not his wittes about him, and waxeth not more wise: who by honest love, and the curteous and pleasaunt company of women, feeleth not himselfe inflamed with vertuous and heavenly thoughtes, and who besides other laudable studies, is not thereby stirred up to Poetry. And thereof it commeth, that Apollo vaunting him selfe to have been the cause of the worke of a certaine Poet, fraught full of amorous devises, Venus withstoode the matter, saying, That that Poet had remained mute, if her sonne had not hit him with his golden shaft. Nowe touching the Conversation with women, all men ought to knowe this, that they ought to doe them all the honour and reverence possible, and that Romulus made a lawe whereby hee ordeined, that in assemblies men shoulde alwayes set women above them. And though everie man for the most part addresseth his service to some one above

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

the rest, and maketh her the starre by whose aspect hee doeth direct all his doings, yet wee must not cease to shewe duetie and reverence to all : and to shewe our selves both in deedes and woordes desirous of their good wil and favour : taking heede howe we say or doe any thing at any time to their shame and reproch. For there is nothing that doeth more dishonour and defame a man then that : whereby hee not only looseth his reputation, but also (being in the disfavour of women) is deprived of that contentation, whiche otherwise hee shoulde receive in their company. Wherefore it is best for a man alwayes to imploye his tongue to their prayse, never discommending them either openly or secretly, either uppon sight or in a rage, or uppon what occasion soever.

GUAZ. I thinke nothing in the worlde more difficult then to take from women an evill opinion, whiche they have once conceived against a man.

ANNIB. You know they are easie to admit an accusation against a man, but hard to remit his offence. And as nothing maketh them stomake us more then to dispraise them, so there is nothing maketh them fancie us more, then to commende them. And for that cause, I have knowen many women whiche bore more favour to the professours of learning and Poetrie, then to any other. Furthermore, he that frequenteth the companie of women, must not enter into strife, and contention with them, or seeke too get the better in reasoning with them. For by suche overthwart and obstinate dealing, there is nothing gotten at their handes, but yl wil. Therefore it is ever better rather to sooth them, then thwart them in their sayinges. But I will ende this matter, concluding that a man cannot doe amisse, so that hee honour, serve, and obeye them, and omit nothing that may admit him into their favour. On the other side, women ought to consider that men will not bee so readie to doe them honour, if in Conversation they behave not them selves modestly, according to their calling and kinde : and dispose not their dooinges in suche sorte, that men may like and thinke well of them. To bring

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

whiche to passe, they are chiefly to take heede of one faulte whiche many of them hardly refraine from, that is, from talking too much.

GUAZ. Doe not you knowe the Proverbe, that three women make a mercat ?

ANNIBALL. I knowe also that it is commonly sayde, That where is least heart, is moste tongue. And therefore silence in a woman is greatly commended : for it setteth her foorth muche, and maketh her thought to be verie wise. Yea, she must not only have regard to keep her tongue, but besides to accompany her words, her laughter, her lookes and behaviour, with such a grave and stately majesty, as besemeth a matron, which I say, because there are in the worlde divers women both honest, vertuous, and wittie, who cary the name of matrones, and yet in their outward behaviour, they shew them selves foolishe, riggishe, and retchles. There are other some of them, who being good elderly women, use themselves like young wanton gyrles, and being women, behave themselves as boldly as men : whereby they muche diminishe their credite and reputation. Moreover, there are some, who coveting to bee counted unreasonable honest, frowne so yll favouredly, and set suche a solemne and sowre countenance on the matter, that they make men thinke them rather proude then honest : and in steede of being well thought of, they make themselves ill liked of. Yea, and by that coy clowde, the bright shining of their beautie and vertue is overcast.

GUAZ. Thereupon the Poet saide,

That in a proper peece many good partes are hid
by curious nicenesse, which to none as yet good ever did.

And surely, they are muche deceived in their reckoning, which thinke to bee thought more honest, by using daintie coynesse. For they consider not how bountie and courtesie are nothing repugnant to honestie, but rather alwaies accompanie it.

ANNIB. I might heere well speake of many women of
240

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

our citie, who by the lowlinesse of their lookes, the comeliness of their persons, the sweetnesses of their wordes, the quickenes of their capacitie, the modestie of their behaviour, and decency of maners, make men greatly delighted in their company. But for that the time would faile mee to speak, namely and sufficiently of them all, and that the worthines of some of them is so great, that without suspition of envying their perfection, I cannot with silence overpasse it, I am minded to present one unto you (without naming her) upon whom all the graces and perfections that may bee, are abundantly bestowed.

GUAZ. Shee hath great cause to stande uppon her pantofoles, and to thinke her halfe pennie better silver then other womens.

ANNIB. If shee shoulde doe so, shee shoulde loose much of that honour and reputation shee hath : for that which chiefly maketh men have her in admiration is, that notwithstanding the surpassing excellencie, whiche is in her, shee maketh no more account of her selfe then other women doe, and seemeth to shewe, that shee doeth not knowe what good partes are in her. So that by this discrete humilitie, shee is exalted to higher dignitie, and men have her in the more honour. I say then that this Lady in conversation is singuler, and mervellous : for of all the noble partes in her, you shall see her make a most delightfull harmony. For first, to the gravenesse of her wordes, agreeth the sweetnesses of her voyce, and the honestie of her meaning : so that the mindes of the hearers intangled in those three nets, feeles themselves at one instant to bee both mooved with her amiableness, and bridled by her honesty. Next, her talke and discourses are so delightfull, that you wyll only then beginne to bee sory, when shee endeth to speake : and wishe that shee woulde bee no more weary to speake, then you are to heare. Yea, shee frameth her jestures so discretely, that in speakyng, shee seemeth to holde her peace, and in holding her peace, to speake. Moreover, when shee knoweth a matter perfectly, and discourseth of it discretely, to the great commendation of her

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

witte, yet shee wyll seeme to speake of it verie doubtfully, to shewe her great modestie. She wyll also in talke cast oft times upon a man such a sweete smyle, that it were enough to bryng him into a fooles Paradise, but that her very countenance conteineth such continencie in it, as is sufficient to cut of all fond hope. And yet shee is so farre from solemne lookes, and distributeth the treasure of her graces, so discretely and so indifferently, that no man departeth from her uncontented. Yet for all that, you must not thinke that shee is over prodigall of her curtesie. For I can assure you this, she winneth moe heartes even with very slender rewardes, then other women doe with the greatest favours they can possibly shewe. And though shee give good countenance to all, yet shee beholdeth them most graciously, and who bestowe their tyme in learning, or otherwise most commendably: in whose company shee taketh singular pleasure, whiche is a manifest signe of her vertuous disposition. But see the great wrong, whiche envious fortune doeth to noble mindes, in not extolling her to the state and power of a Princes, that shee might bee able as well to preferre and bring the vertuous to promotion, as shee doeth nowe honour them, by bearing them singuler affection. I cannot sufficientlye set foorth unto you the graces and perfections of this most perfect peece, but for conclusion I will say, that shee may well bee set for an example, whereto other women ought to conforme themselves, to bee acceptable and well thoughte of in the companie they shall come in.

GUAZ. If I bee not muche deceived, I knowe who it is you speake of, and of whom you make this honourable report.

ANNIB. I spake but of one, and yet yf all the women of this Citie should heare it, I am perswaded everie one would thinke her selfe to be the woman I meant. But you may as well bee deceived in gessing of whom I spake, as I may in reading whom you meane. Therefore let us speake no more of it, but let eache of us be content to keepe his thought secrete.

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

GUAZ. With a good will : But for so much as you have set downe orders to the conversation of women, and have produced so rare, and so high an example, I am partly in doubt whether it bee good for men continually to use this conversation, and therefore I thinke good you limite in what manner, and to what ende wee ought to use it.

ANNIB. With all my heart, for by that meanes you give me occasion to set convenient boundes to the conversation of women. I say then that there are two sortes of leasure, the one evill, the other honest. I call that evill, which proceedeth of a base minde, and which withdraweth a man from watching, from study, from travell, and from all commendable actions : which is onely proper to those, who are good for nothing, who feare the Sunne and the raine, and which apply themselves to vaine devises, and to the sacrifice and service of Venus and Bacchus.

GUAZ. A brother of my taylor, whiche brought mee home some apparell this morning, taketh it otherwise : for talking with mee of his affaires, hee tolde mee, that hee hath foure brothers, wherof three lived by their labour, as hee did, but the other would not worke a stich, but goeth loytering up and downe all day long, saying, That foure knaves may well mainteine and keepe one honest man : meaning that to worke, belongeth to slaves, but to bee idle, to honest men. Nowe judge you how many honest men there are by that reckoning, who are alwaies buzied in taking their ease.

ANNIB. Those same may well say, they have received their hyre : for seeing they enjoy the plesure of being idle, they must not looke to receive the rewarde of vertue. But thinke not yet, that though their bodies bee at ease that their mindes are at quiet : for they are thereby the more occupied, yea, and eaten as it were with the rust of idlenesse : and not knowing howe to use leasure as they ought to doe, they are more greeved with doing nothing, then others with labouring harde. And this idlenesse is not only the cause of vaine and lascivious thoughts, but also of wicked and dishonest deedes. Whereupon Cato used

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

to say, That those whiche did nothing, learned to doe yll. Besides that they are odious to the worlde, yea, and to God also, who is highly displeased, when a naughtie packe or an idle merchant craveth his aide and assistance. * For you know how hee cursed the Figge tree which was without fruite.* Wherefore all those which delight to doe nothing, ought to knowe that there is nothing procureth more infamie to a man, then idlenesse and effeminatenesse. And if it bee unseemely for the ignorant to passe the time idle, muche more are they to bee blamed who are learned. For it is a common saying, that he is in great faulte, which knoweth what is good and doeth it not : and that hee doeth muche yll, who knoweth no good. But for that I have neither minde nor leasure to speake of these idle fellowes, I will now speake of honest leasure, which belongeth to honest men : and I say that all affaires bring with them paine and travell, by reason wherof it is requisite to take in time and place, for medicine, rest, and recreation, whiche are so necessary to our life, that without them we cannot long continue. And therefore it is both reasonable and necessary for a man, sometimes to repose himselfe, and withdrawe his minde from waightie and earnest cogitations, by the example of the invincible Hercules, who for recreation sake used sometime too play with his litle children. Finally, our life is like to instruments of musicke, whiche sometime wresting up the stringes, and sometime by loosing them, become more melodious. And if wee marke well the ende of the publique and solemne playes, whiche Princes in olde time caused to bee set foorth, wee shall knowe that they did it not so muche to get themselves a good name amongst the people, as to recreate and refreshe men after their travelles : that after such shewes they might returne more willingly, and cheerefully to their worke.

GUAZ. I knowe by experience, that there is nothing doeth more weare mee out, nor as they say make the bombaste of my dublet so thinne as continuall affaires. And if I bee molested with mine own private matters, you may well thinke that I am not only molested, but even altogeather

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

mortified with my maisters businesse, which to dispatch to my credite, and as duetie bindeth mee, maketh mee (as you may wel thinke) often cary a pensive hearte within my brest : Being assured that I had by this time left my skinne on the hedge, were it not that otherwhiles I force my selfe to use some recreation and honest pastime.

ANNIB. Though this leasure bee honest, profitable, and necessary, yet there is a certaine measure to bee kept in it, whiche wee must not exceede : For that nature hath not made us for play and pleasure, but rather to spende our time in the study and execution of grave matters.

GUAZ. You meane then to set before mee this leasure, not as meate to feede mee, but as a sallade to get mee a stomake, or els as some confect to close up my stomacke : and you allowe onely so muche leasure as is sufficient to recreate a man, and to renewe his strength after travell : meaning, that wee should play to live, but not live to play.

ANNIB. My meaning is even so : for hee that shoulde wallowe continually in pleasures and delightes, remaining alwaies idle without doing any thing, woulde soone become intemperate and lascivious. Thereof it commeth, that in olde time were set downe the exercise of wrestling and Musicke, for the two strongest pillers, to stay up our life by. For as the one maketh a man strong and fierce, so the other maketh him milde and gentle : But both together serve both the body and minde to muche purpose. Seeing then that in the conversation with women is chiefly founde this honest leasure, which serveth to comfort, yea, and to take from us the greevous passions which oppresse our heartes, wee must take heede that wee bee not so wrapped in it, that wee never come out of it, least thereby wee distemper the minde, and effeminate it in suche sorte, that it loose that courage whiche is proper to man. And therefore wee must use that pleasure and recreation not for ordinary foode, but for some extraordinary preservative, or some exquisite restoritie, remembring that olde saying, that wee must taste honie but with our fingers end : * yea, wee must deale so warily in the matter, that it may bee said

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

that wee have been in the very jawes of Scilla, and drunke of Cyrces cup, and yet have escaped both drowning and transfourming.*

GUAZ. Though this honest leasure (as you say) serve to take away the care of the minde, yet it is so that oft times in discourse (whiche is caused by this leasure) the minde is voide of travell. For a man must whet his wits in suche sorte, that in steede of taking his ease, hee sometime taketh more paine then when hee is waightily affaired.

ANNIB. I thinke there is no honest leasure, but hath some exercise of the minde or of the body joyned unto it. For the wise holdeth opinion, that to injoy leasure well, it is necessary that wee imploy it in learning somewhat. And therefore you see that though musicke hath been invented for the pleasure and recreation of the minde, yet it is not learned by chaunce, but by science, about whiche a man must travel his minde, like as at Chestes or other such games. Contrariwise, it is our use when we have spent a great part of the day either in studie or about publique or private affaires, to walke either alone, or with company the space of an houre upon pleasure. And though wee exercise the body in going, and the minde in devising, yet all that time is attributed to leasure and recreation: for that it is chiefly bestowed to the ende to withdrawe the minde from waightie affaires, and carefull thoughts.

GUAZ. You make me heere remember our peasants of the countrie, who having laboured sore al the weeke, spende the sunday in daunsing out of al crie: in so much that saving your reverence, they stinke of swet, and take more payne that day only, then they doe in all the worke dayes besides. And yet according to your opinion it must bee called leasure or passetyme.

ANNIB. It can not be termed otherwise: for albeit they exercise the body lesse in working then in daunsing, yet they doe the one with paine and grieve, and the other with so great pleasure, that it maketh them the next day after goe to their worke a great deale more lustily. And if you meane nothing else, I confesse that I my selfe am in that

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

respect of the nature of those Countrie fellowes, for beeing weiered with the continuall exercise, I use all the day, sometime on foote, sometime on horsebacke, to see my patients, in the evening, in way of pastime and recreation, I often walke with your brother, or others, almost halfe a mile out of the towne: and in this paine I finde great ease and refreshing to my minde that is weiered with the travel of the day. Whereby you understande that all the time whiche is chiefly spent for pleasure, ought too goe under the name of leasure, though there bee in it some exercise either of minde or body. It is very true, that this leasure looseth it name, when it is turned into continuall exercise without doing ought els, so that a man cannot properly tearme leasure or pastime, the exercise of a Musitian, who all the day long doeth nothing but teache some or other to sing, or to play on some instrumentes. In whiche respect belike Phillip kyng of Macedon rebuked his sonne Alexander, for that hee was so skilfull in Musicke, not that he misliked musike, but because his sonne was so exquisite in it, that hee doubted it was his chiefe profession, neglecting other thinges more necessary to his estate: whiche was not unlike to the doing of the Emperour Domitian, who put from being of his counsayle a Noble man, because hee daunced too artificially. Wherefore wee may gather heereby, that wee ought not in passing the time to loose the time: but to limite this leasure in suche sort, that we take no more of it then is necessary for the recreation of our mindes.

GUAZ. I am of opinion, that amongst many pastimes and pleasures, whereby mens mindes are recreated, there is none more to bee accounted of, then that which is taken in feastes and banquets: I meane not the sumptuous and solemne ones, but the friendly and familiar, which are set foorth by a Poet, for the things most appertaining to the felicitie of mans life.

ANNIB. As solemne feastes are full of noyse and confusion, so the other are full of quiet and friendship. And as the first by the diversitie and delicacie of fare, provoke

THE CIVILE CONVERSATION

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

men to the pleasure and filling of the body, so the other with sobrietie, and the good companie of only friends together, worke the solace and recreation of the mind.

GUAZ. I can not but often commend that most civile custome of Fraunce, where the parents, friends, and neighbors agree together, to bring every one their ordinary provision, assoone into the house of one, assoone of another, where without great cost, and yet with great varietie of meate, and diversly dressed, leaving all their pensive thoughts without the doore, they suppe merily, lovingly, and friendly together.

ANNIB. That good custome is no doubt greatly to bee commended: for if sometimes in travayling by the way, it greatly refresheth us, when at our inne we meete with good companie (though straungers unto us) with whom wee may talke and be mery at the table, you may soone gesse howe much more good it doth us, when wee are in the companie of our kinsfolkes and friends.

GUAZZO. I thinke that in this kinde of conversation also, there are some orders and lawes to be prescribed, therefore I looke you should make mention therof.

ANNIB. Many excellent writers have set downe many orders to be observed in feasts, but the chiefe are these, that the feast alwayes ought to begin at the Graces, and ende at the Muses: that is, that the number of the guests be not under three, nor above nyne: that they be neither too talkative, nor too dumbe: that no man take al the talke to himself, a thing very unseemely, for al ought to bee partakers as well of the talke, as they are of the wine. That the discourse be pleasant, and of suche matters as men have no leasure to talke of abroade while they are about their businesse: joyning (if it may be) pleasure with profite. That the talke, specially amongst women, be not doubtful, hard, and intricate: wherby even amongst men, the hearers are made melancholike by beating their braines to understand it. And thereupon it is saide, that a certaine Oratour being requested at a table to speake of eloquence, answered, Those things which are fit for the

OF M. STEEVEN GUAZZO

THE
SECOND
BOOKE

place and time present, I am ignorant in, and those whiche I know, would be uttered here out of season. Lastly, that seeing such meetings are made uppon good will, the guests ought above al thing to avoide not only contentious speech, but also over liberal speech, for it seemeth to come from a head wel warmed with wine.

GUAZ. I understand that the last yere there were made in this citie certaine banquets, wherat were present divers Ladies and Gentlewomen of marke, and with them the most renowned Lord Vespasian Gonzaga, with others, amongst whom were used many discourses and devises, no lesse honest then pleasant.

ANNIB. I understoode the whole order of it by M. Botazzo which was present, who hath faythfully registred them in his excellent memorie, and they are wel worthy to be published in print to the common profit, either by him or some other writer.

GUAZ. I should thinke you did me a singular pleasure, if it would please you before my departure to make rehearsal therof unto mee.

ANNIB. I wil not faile to doe it to morrowe, after wee have ended our domestical conversation, if wee have sufficient time for it : or at the furthest we will speake of it the next day following.

GUAZ. I take willingly your gentle offer, and in the meane whyle I pray you forget me not.

ANNIB. You shal understand, that as this day beeing in the house we went abroad, so now going abroad I wil stay in the house with you : from whom I cannot separate or unloose my heart.

GUAZ. I wil doe the like on my part, that this knot may be perpetual and indissoluble.

An ende of the second Booke.

